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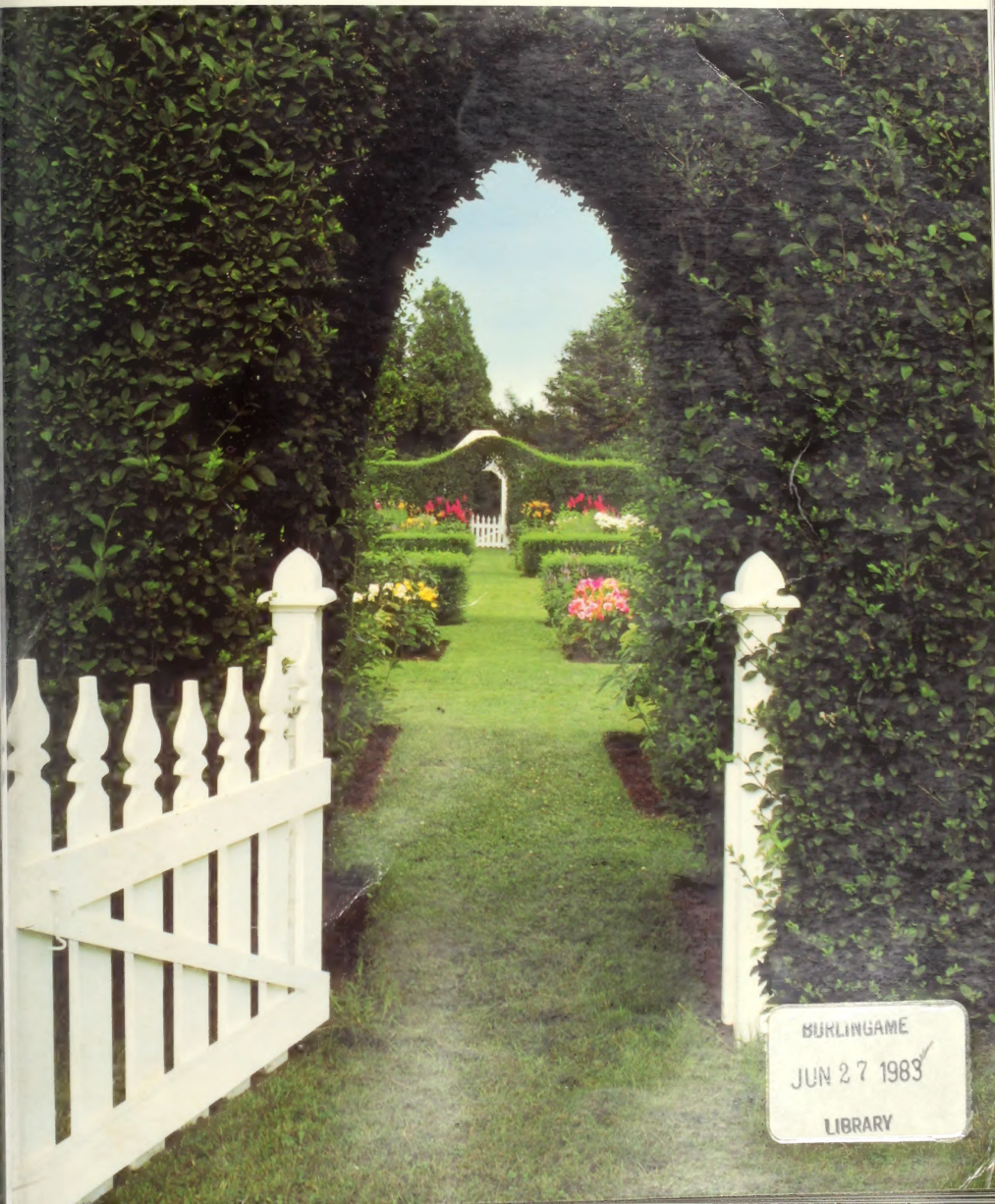
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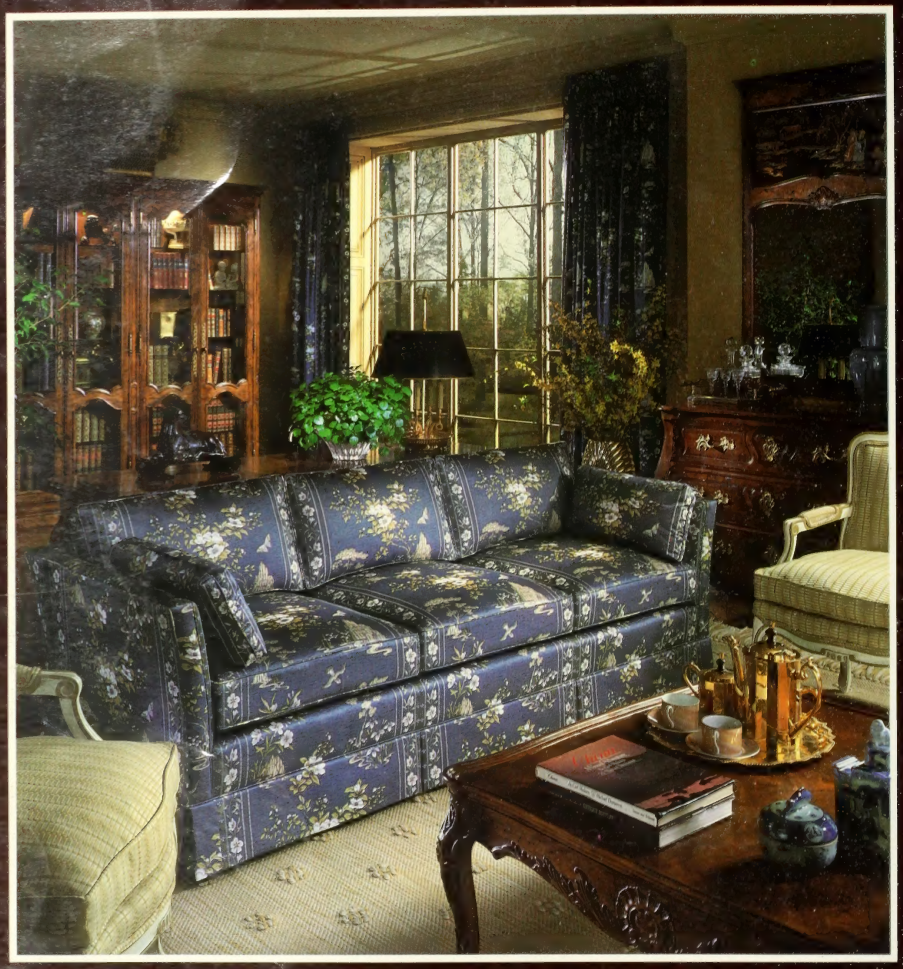
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Volume 155, Number 7

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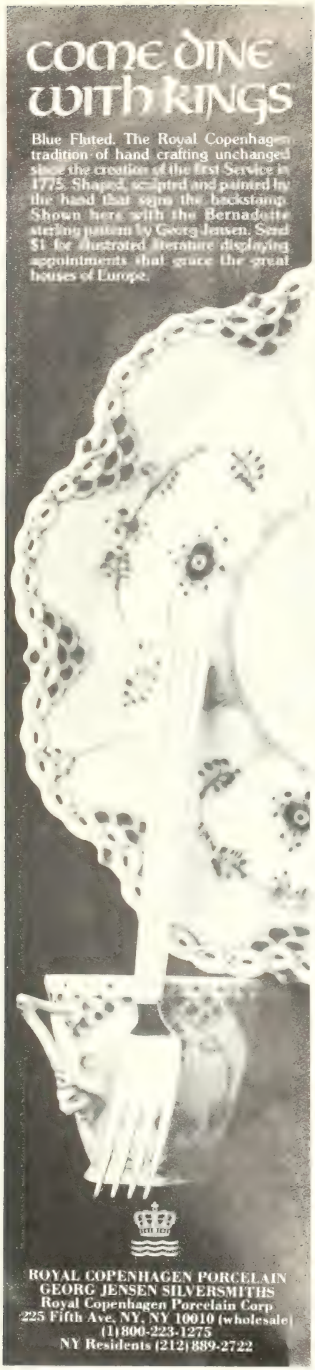
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THE DARK HORSE OF DECORATORS

Geoffrey Bennison keeps a low profile for clients with a high sense of style

By John Richardson

The darkest horse among decorators today is an Englishman, Geoffrey Bennison. His name is on the lips of cognoscenti on both sides of the Atlantic—"the only alternative to Mongiardino," according to one European admirer—but the nature of his style, even the whereabouts of his work, is something of a mystery. True, Bennison puts a premium on privacy (when last seen, he was about to go to ground in southern Morocco); still he is hardly a shy violet and can usually be persuaded to discuss his life and work with old friends like myself.

Geoffrey and I first met during the war, when we were fellow students at the Slade. Because of the bombing, London's foremost art school had been "evacuated"—hideous wartime word!—to Oxford, where the two of us became great friends. Geoffrey had already established himself as the Slade's most accomplished student. Thanks to his passion for Ingres, he had honed a natural gift for drawing into a skill that was the envy of us all; he had a no-less-enviable instinct for the sensuous qualities of paint, a subtle sense of color, a faultless sense of tone, and a preoccupation with the theater, both as a designer and performer. Added to which he had a colorful, carefree personality and great humor. Given these talents and his youthful panache, Geoffrey stood out as the student most likely to make a name for himself.



A self-portrait by Geoffrey Bennison, painted in the late 1940s, oil on canvas.

We Slade students were particularly fascinated by an elderly gnome (was he in fact more than fifty?) who perched on a large mushroomlike cushion at the back of the life class and executed painstakingly inept drawings of our doleful model. The gnome turned out to be the enchanting Lord Berners (Nancy Mitford's "Lord Merlin"), who had an ugly man's passion for beauty and the means to satisfy it. What a revelation his house turned out to be, with its early Corots and early Dalis, its superb needlework carpets laid one upon another, and its amazing garden aflutter with doves dyed sky-blue pink! Lord Berners enabled us to glimpse a glamorous world hitherto only familiar through Cecil Beaton's photographs. And he made a lasting impression on Geoffrey by demonstrating how, by dint of taste and connoisseurship, fantasy and flair, it was possible to reconcile all manner of extravaganzas—Baroque and Victorian, high camp and Surrealist—with the classic look of an English country house.

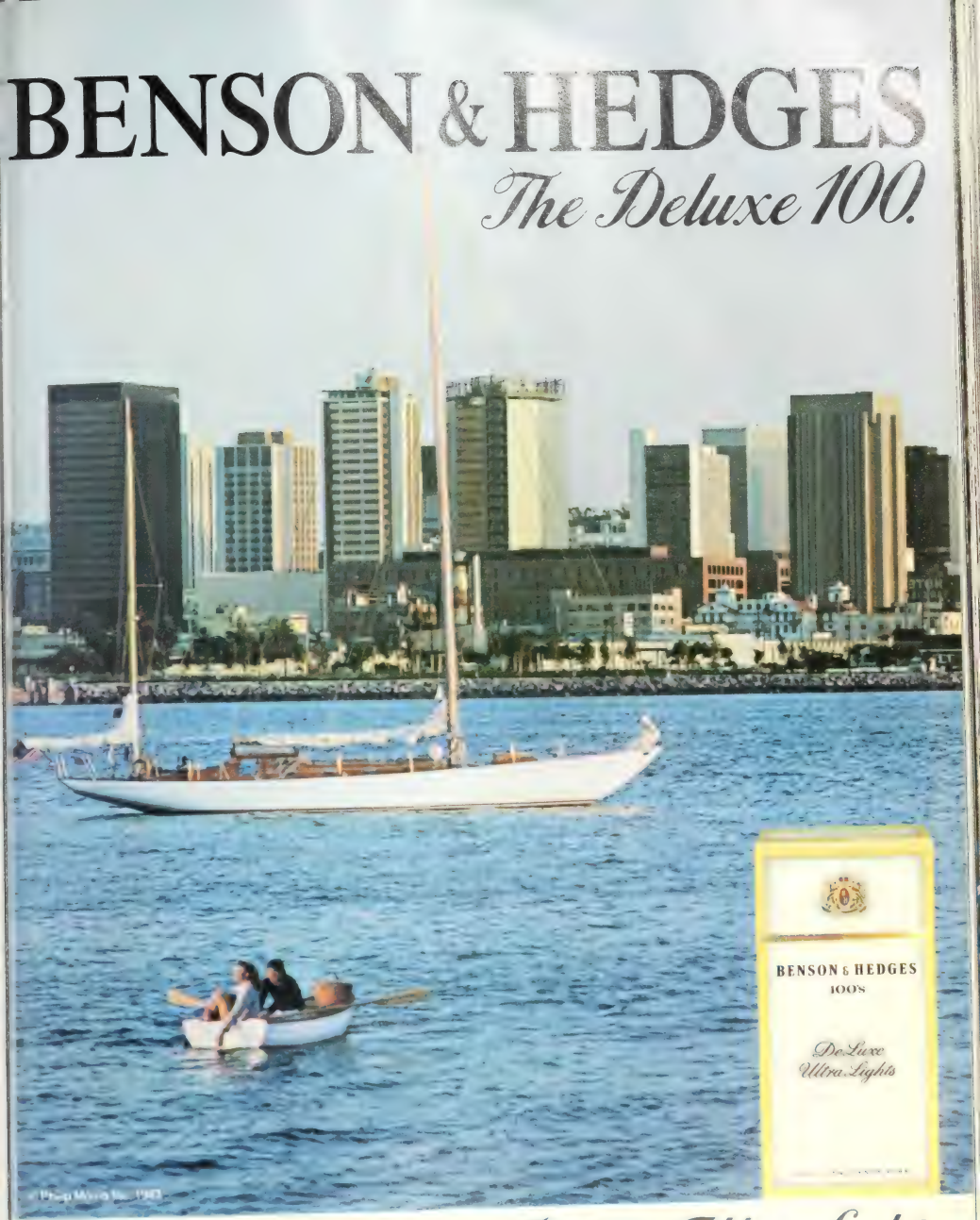
Instead of leaving the Slade in a blaze of glory, Geoffrey was suddenly struck down by tuberculosis. And he spent the next seven years in and out of sanatoriums, first in England, later, when the war was over, in the Waldhaus (of *Magic Mountain* fame) in Davos. There he fell in with a congenial group of young Italians—directors and designers of Visconti's team, who "kept me sane until a miracle drug came along and saved my life." In the early 1950s Geoffrey was able to return to London, cured but broke and disinclined to go back to his easel.

A friend suggested that he invest his last few pounds in some junk and set up a stall at the Portobello market. Geoffrey did so, and such was his eye for quality that within a month or two he had taken on a second stall. Later he opened a shop in Islington, followed by one, two, finally three shops on Pimlico (*Continued on page 12*)

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"He soon established a reputation for being a source of offbeat items of all styles and periods—textiles and upholstery in particular"

(*Continued from page 10*) Road—now concentrated under one roof. Geoffrey insists that his business would never have prospered without the support of his inimitable partner, Terry Green—a trendy version of Sam Weller—who died much too young, two years ago.

From the very start Geoffrey, who confesses to being "a total magpie," made a point of stocking his shop with things that appealed to him as opposed to things that were sure to sell. And he soon established a reputation for being a source of offbeat items of all styles and periods—textiles and upholstery in particular. I still recall Baroque bed-hangings made of persimmon-colored brocade, a pair of Second Empire sofas dripping with gentian-blue *passementerie*—"very Princesse Mathilde"—and the best-ever set of furniture covered in carpet, plush, and fringe. Decorative sculpture and drawings are also a recurrent feature of this eclectic shop, from Agrippina in assorted marbles to an early portrait drawing by Ingres. Through the years Bennison and Co. has sold me many things I treasure: a log-box covered with needlepoint in imitation of Turkey carpet, a club fender supported on stag's hooves, and countless cushions in the colorful Klee-like embroidery that the ladies of Fez and Tetuán can no longer be bothered to do.

Geoffrey's somewhat *outré* taste is matched by no less *outré* wit, hence the visitors who throng his shop at teatime. Teatime, it must be said, lasts most of the day and is a mixed blessing to the extent that the scruffy basement sanctum, where the proprietor holds court, is apt to be packed with his groupies—duchesses, decorators, dustmen—out more for a good laugh than a good buy. "If only some of you," Geoffrey is forever railing at them, "would occasionally open the handbag and blow the cobwebs off the checkbook. . . ."

For all his success as a dealer, Geoffrey has remained an artist at heart, an artist for whom decorating is now his only means of expression. "I love it," he says. "I now regard my shop the way a chef regards his kitchen closet: a source of ingredients for specific jobs. If I suddenly need a bit of mahogany to cool things down, the chances are it's on hand." Compared to his confrères on this side of the Atlantic, Geoffrey's *oeuvre* is small—a dozen or so major jobs—but then he turns down far more work than he accepts ("have to keep the shop going"). Then again he works slowly, devoting more time than most decorators to basic tasks like designing stuffs ("love chintz but can't bear those white backgrounds that hit you in the eye"), cutting stencils ("can be marvelous in the right place: a pity *pochoirs* are spreading like measles"), mixing colors ("*never* trust a painter or a color chart"). And, if need be, Geoffrey can buckle down to wood-graining or marbelizing, although this is usually left to the skillful Jean Hornak ("my mentor"). Such is his obsession with technical minutiae, he will spend hours unpicking an eighteenth-century pelmet "to find out why it hangs in that special way." "My secret insofar as I have one," he says, "lies in my curiosity. I'm forever asking *why*. I have to discover exactly how things work."

Given his quirks, Geoffrey can only decorate for people who are, or will be, friends. Indeed his first job was in the nature of a *gage d'amitié* for one of his closest associates, the English movie and theater director Peter Glenville; and Glenville's noble apartment on 68th Street in New York (it formerly belonged to Millicent Rogers) still looks as casually sumptuous as it did when first done 25 years ago. His second client was a friend for whom he decorated a Chinese restaurant—still one of the prettiest places to dine in London—and his third was the English publisher, Lord Weidenfeld, who has done much to sing the decorator's praises.

"I cannot," Geoffrey says, "work for someone unless there is total rapport and, if possible, blind faith, because most of my jobs look simply terrible right up to the last moment; then there is a sudden click and everything falls into place. Clients have to accept the fact that I go about things in a highly unorthodox way—instinctively, intuitively, never by rote. For instance, I often work backwards, hanging wallpaper or stuff I've designed for the walls before painting the cornice or skirting-board, getting the curtains right before putting up the painted ceiling. And then what most people expect of a decorator—ghastly good taste and period pedantry—is anathema to me."

Geoffrey likes to spend hours alone in the rooms he is decorating, making sketches, establishing an atmosphere, brooding on questions of color, gauging the degree of light, playing around with the scale, above all tinkering with *tone:* "The most important element of all and the one most decorators disregard. Unless the tonality is right, nothing works. So out with those terrible little accessories that proclaim, 'I'm only a cantaloupe-colored cushion but what a bold statement I make!' "

As someone who has studied stage design, he is no less obsessed with lighting and has an instinct for chiaroscuro that might be described as Caravaggesque, "which is why I'm so nervous when my rooms are photographed. That blaze of light from some place that should be in shadow—from behind a coal scuttle, for instance—or those floods that bounce a million watts off a ceiling intended to be neutral falsify values, destroy atmosphere." And then, unless he has set out to do a grandiose set piece for a hall or dining room, Geoffrey hates things to look contrived. "Even when I've pulled out all the stops, I still want my rooms to look welcoming, lived-in, never intimidating, showy, or cold."

If Bennison's decorating is not better known to the general public, this is because most of it has been done in France for clients who shun publicity. For instance, no photographs have appeared of H.R.H. Princess Firyal of Jordan's Paris apartment, its black lacquer dining room, and its spectacular Second Empire bedroom hung with specially designed trophies of ribbon-threaded lace over banana-colored brocade. And not nearly enough has been published on the magnificent houses and apartments that Geoffrey has done for the French Rothschilds—not least a mirrored dining room in the style of Daniel Marot.

Very much a Lancashire lad at heart, Geoffrey wishes he could do more decorating in England, but the economy makes it difficult. "The overtaxed English are only telling the truth when they say they cannot afford the cost." America, by contrast, is the land of opportunity, where the tremendous expense of anything made to order—$350 a yard for not very lavish fringe—is taken for granted. To this extent Geoffrey is envious of U.S. decorators: "I also admire them for their amazing versatility, their professionalism, and for the flourishing industry they have built up. I only wish things had not become so mechanized that old-fashioned craftsmanship goes by the board. That is why I bring over my upholsterer and fabric-painter from Paris, cabinetmaker from London, and grainer and stenciler from the Isle of Wight. Until recently I also brought over all my paint, because without white lead (illegal in the U.S.) colors have no body or resonance. However, that situation appears to be improving."

And the new apartment Geoffrey is doing for himself in London? "It's the nursery floor of a house in Audley Square—somewhat haunted for you and me, because it was the childhood home of our old friend James Bailey [a defiantly romantic set designer who recently died]. All I'm prepared to say is that it will be quite simple—no fancy stenciling, masses of books, and, to exorcise James, I'll paint the walls Red Riding Hood red." □

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IRENE M. SELZNICK

Producer's daughter, producer's wife, producer in her own right, she has now written a revealing memoir of Hollywood's brilliant, bad, and beautiful

By Steven M. L. Aronson

"She was elegant. Her eyes were grey-green, black-edged, carved eyes—used to domination, risks, secret decisions; used to men, women, and money."

So wrote that artisan of language Enid Bagnold of Irene Mayer Selznick, who had produced—extending the boundary of that word's meaning—Bagnold's complex and coruscating play *The Chalk Garden*.

The playwright added: "More imperious than I on my behalf she was filled towards the play with an unfaltering magnificence of loyalty. She pushed and poked me into rearrangements, into doing things I thought I couldn't do. Nobody has ever got so near writing without writing."

Though some people who write and do publish never even come *close* to writing, it was perhaps inevitable that someone who was so close already to that "art and sullen craft" should one day make it her own.

To read Irene Mayer Selznick's recently published full-dress autobiography, *A Private View*, is to have the contours of Hollywood in its bright earliness defined. A true child of Filmdom—the younger, sheltered daughter of the mighty Louis B. Mayer, then for fifteen years the wife of the live-wire David O. Selznick, of whom she writes that she made it "possible for him to be impossible"—she met and had interesting opportunities for intimacy with almost everyone.

In her richly pleasurable book, which is remarkable for the faults it lacks as well as for the virtues it possesses (rock-bottom intelligence, stringent honesty, and judgment uncorroded), we are given at last the *human* facts about Howard Hughes, John Hay Whitney, Jean Harlow, Cary Grant, Katharine Hepburn, Vivien Leigh, William Randolph Hearst, Henry Luce, Ingrid Bergman, Marlon Brando, Tennessee Williams, and dozens of other leading lights who have come down to us larded with legend. Yet for all their collective incandescence, they are overshadowed by the figure of Irene Mayer Selznick herself.

"I am going to meet Mrs. Selznick who wants to produce my New Orleans play," Tennessee Williams wrote giddily to a friend in 1947. "She is supposed to have 16 million dollars *and* good taste. I am dubious."

He needn't have been. Quick to apprehend—and eager to welcome—the new, she was to rigorously preside over the original production of *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Protecting playwrights was her strong suit; sometimes she had to protect them from themselves—it was Mrs. Selznick who fished *Streetcar*'s most famous line, "I have always depended on the kindness of strangers," out of the wastebasket into which Williams had thrown it.

For the next twenty years, Irene Mayer Selznick's name would be a byword for theatrical quality. Indeed, she would emerge as the most elegant Broadway producer, unsurpassed in her understanding of refined stagecraft, and a champion of the theater as one of the forums from which we draw the landmarks of our taste.

(Continued on page 16)



Mrs. David O. Selznick in the dining room on Sunset Drive, 1948 or 1949



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McGUIRE

(Continued from page 14) She was, after all, a Hollywood producer's daughter, and the producer had good taste. "My father always used to talk about class," says Irene Selznick, presenting the drawing-room of her far-flung apartment in the Pierre Hotel, where she has lived for the past 32 years. The room is all autumn tones. The furniture is eighteenth-century English, French, and Dutch; there's a Cézanne still-life, a Degas, a Vuillard, and a large Matisse of a woman David Selznick insisted bore a striking resemblance to Irene. "It doesn't look a *thing* like me," she protests, but oh, it does! The rug, a Bessarabian, is reflected in the light tracery of the pictures.



Mr. and Mrs. David O. Selznick on a cruise in 1932

Then Mrs. Selznick leads her visitor down the long length of a hallway into the hunter green library that is the heart of her apartment. "Appearances, good manners, refinement—those were my father's handles. You know, he started out in scrap metal but he had *instinctive* taste. One of the things that attracted me about David Selznick was *his* taste—it was more developed than my father's, but then, David was a more sophisticated man."

When the time came, Irene Mayer Selznick would take care to extend her father's and her husband's commitments to taste to her own business dealings. I tell her that a friend we have in common, a celebrated Broadway director, recently informed me, "Irene always gave a very stylish contract."

"Stylish?" she laughs. "I'll say this much—once costs were recovered, I gave them all a break. But I think I was a very economical producer in terms of getting a play *on*. I watched pennies, because a large part of this was other people's money. But always, once it got in the black, I gave people a little bit more than they had expected—that's all."

I remark how surprising it is that a woman so famously protective of her privacy, should wind up writing such an intimate autobiography.

"Yes," she replies, "I'm candid about myself, all right—for the first time, maybe. Moss Hart used to tease me *unmercifully*. He would ask me where I'd been the night before—having seen me, mind you, at an opening—because he knew I was so discreet that I would never tell. I mean, I carried discretion to the limits."

Just then, the telephone rings. "Oh *Cary*," Mrs. Selznick lights up. "I heard you were in town. Listen, I'll have to call you back."

I risk a small joke: "Was that Cary Grant or Governor Carey?"

"It's hard to say," Mrs. Selznick replies, not smiling, the carved eyes narrowing. Then: "All right, for you I'll break my rule about privacy: to make a point—that there's continuity in my life, continuity down the line. I'm a great one for continuity with friends. It was Cary Grant."

"Don't you think some lines of continuity may be broken now that your book is out?"

"*Why?*" she shoots back. "I wasn't talking out of school. I know secrets about everybody in that book. You *can* write a book without betraying anybody's confidences. I mean, some people in the book died while I was still correcting galleys, and I changed not a word. Because, you see, if their dying had tempted me to change anything, then I wouldn't have believed anything *else* in the book. Tennessee, Ingrid, Enid, and wait, there's a fourth one. George Cukor—now *there's* four. And I changed not a syllable. With all the license in the world."

" 'The dead belittled by the littleness of the living,' " I quote Cyril Connolly's fine phrase to her.

"Now Cukor—I gave *him* a break. I should have said worse. I fired him from directing *Chalk Garden*—he was doing it with his left hand—but that didn't really hurt him. What it did was intensify the *Gone with the Wind* episode, when David fired him. In a curious way Cukor always linked *me* with *that*.

"As for Miss Enid Bagnold," Mrs. Selznick bristles, "in *her* autobiography she makes *me* a tank, plowing through, when I'm going tippytoe because I know that I've got to breathe gently, that this is creative work and a breath can blow it away. Enid was high-strung, you know, for all her heartiness. One thing I'll never forget is Zoe, this *(Continued on page 20)*


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(Continued from page 16) bull mastiff who belonged to Enid's husband Roderick, whom Enid, who was enormous, towered over. Beige, great big dog—used to lie stretched out in the dining room, and there was a teeny-weeny little dog, a spidery-legged little brown and black thing called Edward that was Enid's dog, that used to stand on Zoe during meals. So here's Zoe, this bulk, and here's Edward standing on Zoe, running up and down Zoe. And there's this teeny little man Roderick with this great big pale bitch of a dog and *enormous* Enid—'heroic in size' is how I described her—with a little itty-bitty dog. But my editor cut all this out of the book." Even as Mrs. Selznick reminisces in her Pierre aerie, the picturesque sketches Enid Bagnold did in South Africa—and gave her—gaze in forbearance from the wall. (No ghost gently chuckles.)

"As I recall, Enid Bagnold described you in her book as dripping sables and flashing diamonds when you came to stay with her in her small English village."

"At Rottingdean? That would be the day! Enid had this very strange idea that I was brought up in Babylonian luxury—you know, marble halls. It was only occasionally I was allowed to sparkle. My father indulged my sister and me only when we were going to New York. He wasn't going to have us showing off in Hollywood, but on the other hand he didn't want us reflecting badly on him in New York. Later, Valentina made all my clothes. They'd be in fashion today. You could move in them, you could run, you could stretch, you could reach, you could embrace someone without having your dress ride up. And they were simplicity itself, than which there was no grander.

"On the plays I had a lot to say about the clothes. On *Bell, Book and Candle* I went to endless trouble—endless. I went to Valentina's and chose Lilli Palmer's clothes. I remember a wonderful apricot evening dress, it was a little dressier than it should have been but it was so glamorous. Then I decided I wanted walls for the set *this* color," she says, marking that hunter green, "because the dress would look wonderful against it. Then I went shopping for bibelots and things for the set, because I did not care for what the designer did. All the bits in *Bell, Book and Candle* came from Second and Third Avenue junk shops. Darling Lilli left everything in my hands—she would venture no opinion, although she had lovely taste.

"It was David Bruce," Mrs. Selznick explains, "who took me around New York and tried to teach me about antiques, give me an idea of what is good: 'If you look at the best,' he said, 'then you will understand.' You see, I've had luck all the way down—good fortune. I'd just built a house in the country and I had the blueprints with me." Suddenly Mrs. Selznick disappears into the next room, returning with a red leather album of photographs of her former country house, "Imspond," all taken by her old friend Leland Hayward when he was a months-long houseguest. "So there was David Bruce, someone who had time, taste, knowledge, and who was delighted to introduce me to the top dealers. It was walk, look, listen. Lessons at the right time from the right people."

Lessons in perfection. Too much that is soggy and unrealized gets put on in the theater these days, I comment, playing to Mrs. Selznick's well-known impatience with the imperfect.

"Doesn't *everybody* want perfection, and what are they doing in the theater if they don't?" she responds.



Irene Selznick in the late 1930s

"What's the fun otherwise? I remember how thrilled I was when I first read *Streetcar,* it was so powerful." Carefully set on the table in front of us is a power-less streetcar, a wooden miniature that Mrs. Selznick explains arrived not under its own steam but courtesy of her great friends Jock and Betsey Whitney on the first anniversary of the play's opening.

It turns out that Mrs. Selznick and I were both present at Tennessee Williams's memorial service a few months ago when Jessica Tandy, the first and indelible Blanche DuBois, took the stage. "Wasn't that wonderful! Wasn't that marvelous!" Mrs. Selznick exclaims. "How she put her hand up to the mike and said, 'Could I please do without this and use my own voice—I want the use of my hands.' I'm so anti-mike in the theater I go crazy, I can't *stand* all this miking. And the house applauded: how wonderful that someone has a voice to fill a theater and is prepared to use it and is actually going to talk without that interference. And the moment Jessica kind of stepped back, I knew that she was going to do the speech that begins, 'When I was sixteen, I made the discovery—love. All at once, and much, much too completely.' It's a representative speech, it reflects a great deal of what Blanche has been through, the extremes—it's a compressed version of her life. I[illegible] of the truly heartbreaking things, and it *ascends* so quickly. You go right up and you're *in* it, it's not dependent on what went before or what comes after—it stands. That was 1947. This is 1983. And I thought it was richer than when Jessica did it before. I went backstage afterwards and threw my arms around her."



Tennessee Williams, Irene Selznick, and director Elia Kazan at the opening night of *A Streetcar Named Desire.*

While I sat in that darkened theater overwhelmed by the pure lyric force of what has to be one of the great set pieces in modern theater, Mrs. Selznick was looking back across a wide distance—with nostalgia and naked pride—to Blanche's brokenness.

Tennessee Williams wrote in his autobiography: "Nearly all of Blanche's cries to the world in her season of desperation have survived because they were true cries of her embattled heart." Survived also, I thought, thanks to the patience, industry, superlative taste, and unselfish understanding of the singular Irene Mayer Selznick. □



A GUIDE TO TABLE TALK

For memorable conversation,
only the table beats the bed
By P. J. O'Rourke



P. J. O'Rourke ready for some table talk

The book of Proverbs says, "Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith." But a dinner with brilliant conversation surpasses herbs, ox, and love combined. The best pleasures of the feast proceed from the lips, not to them.

As a scene for conversation, dinner has great advantages. The company is gathered closely together. Interruptions are discouraged. Also, there is another use available for the mouth. This is important. Statements and responses may be composed while teeth work the inside of an artichoke leaf. And a bite of something more substantial will be a big help when you've chatted your way into a cul-de-sac. The only better place for conversation is bed. But, unless you have ultramodern standards, that limits the guest list. And, even then, having five or six people in your bed is more likely to cause talk than conversation.

Not just any kind of dinner will do. A tea or buffet won't do. Dinner must be a sit-down meal. And the number of guests must be small, eight at most. Conversation is not a spectator sport or a relay race to be run up and down a banquet table seating fifty. There should be no visual obstructions such as immense floral centerpieces. It is impossible for a guest to make any but the most pastoral repartee when his face is framed in mums. Also, the food has to be of a kind that allows one guest to look another in the face while eating. Corn on the cob is bad. Spaghetti is worse. French onion soup is unthinkable. Emphasize refreshments. The better the wine, champagne, and brandy, the stronger and brighter the talk. Eschew the guest who doesn't drink. He's too likely to talk about why he doesn't. But also avoid hard liquor. Gin martinis are particularly dangerous. Guests will be reduced to dogs in their communicative abilities—sniffing and barking and howling.

The guests must be carefully selected. Mix good talkers with good listeners. And don't mistake for good listeners people who are simply quiet. Furniture is quiet. A good listener listens with enthusiasm. He encourages the talk [illegible] pertinent questions, is able to [illegible] upon the subject or deftly change it. A good talker must have all the qualities of a good listener plus an ability to hold forth at some length: to tell a fully rounded anecdote, make an elaborate jest, convey news in piquant detail, or give an unexpected coif to the feathers of reason. And a good talker must be able to do this without inspiring other guests to pitch him out a window. Such people are invaluable. They give the rest of us time to eat.

Yet conversation is a group activity, and the participants should be thought of as a team, albeit with certain stars. The best teamwork is the result of practice. The best guests for good conversation are guests who've had good conversation with each other before. Their moves are polished. Mr. X will give fulsome praise to some item of popular culture and pass the ball to Miss Y, who will say something pert.

Mr. X: "*Smithereens* is an artfully unattractive movie with a protagonist who's purposely unsympathetic, and it has no scenes showing development of personal relationships because our imaginations are intended to fill in not what did happen but what did not."

Miss Y: "Things that require more than three negatives to praise never make money."

The wit of the Algonquin Round Table had more to do with such drill than with the native genius of its habitués.

If you can't invite the same group repeatedly or if *(Continued on page 24)*


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"Conversation is not a spectator sport or a relay race to be run up and down a banquet table seating fifty"

(Continued from page 22) you don't know any such group to invite,then try to gather people who have something in common. But make sure what they have in common is not a point of vanity. Only an idiot would have two architects, two opera tenors, or two Supreme Court justices at the table.

Also make sure your guests don't want to kill each other—a warning that should be unnecessary. But many hosts think it "interesting" to invite, say, the head of the Bulgarian KGB and a representative of the Vatican curia, or Jerzy Kosinski and the editors of *The Village Voice*. This is all right for cocktail parties, but at a small seated dinner it's liable to result in stony silences or tossed gravy boats.

And do not invite people who have only one interest in their lives, even if everyone else at the meal is similarly obsessed. Extended conversations on one topic quickly degenerate from ideas to opinions and from opinions to bigotries. Six fervent devotees of French Symbolist poetry will be fine through soup, but by cheese and fruit they will be yelling at each other.

"Verlaine's clustered images suggesting mood and emotion stink like pigs!"

"Do not!"

And so on.

The one thing that has to be mutual among guests is not acquaintance, interests, or background, but attitude. Good conversation takes place on a plane above mortal affairs. There must be sufficient detachment to banish the stupider emotions. The purpose of conversation—if something that is so much an art can be said to have a purpose—is to learn how others see things, how others make sense of existence, or make peace with its nonsensicality. Good conversation gives you the advantage of being Argus-eyed or Hydra-headed (though, it is to be hoped, with nicer heads).

Conversation is therefore no place to talk about yourself. Your guests can observe *you* perfectly well and don't need help. What they want to hear is something they don't know or haven't thought of. Conversation is especially no place for the small and boring extensions of the self. Do not talk about your pets or infant grandchildren. By the same token, avoid being too personal with others. Some will think your inquiries rude, but worse, the rest will jump to answer them. The disease of narcissism is not cured by spreading it around the table.

Neither has conversation room for awe or envy. Someone may be admired or praised, but an awe-struck recitation of the powers and virtues of Fritz Mondale, for example, would put a damper on the evening. And a sudden outburst of jealous indignation that you aren't he would bring talk to a cold halt.

Bitterness and complaint also lower the tone of conversation, and violate a rule of general decorum besides: "A gentleman never complains about anything he is unable or unwilling to remedy." Unless you're going to dash from the table and balance Social Security's income and outlay with a personal check, you should have another glass of wine and let the talk pass to outrageous defense expenditures.

The taboo against querulousness, however, should not be taken as a prohibition of damning things. Damning is a perfectly Olympian thing to do and has been a source of delight to great minds throughout history. You can damn the government up and down, call its every minion illegitimate progeny of slime mold, and say that a visit to Washington is like taking a bath in a tub full of live squid, so long as you don't complain.

And most repulsive of all faults in [illegible]lance is advice. It shows every kind [illegible] respect for the knowledge and [illegible]ent of others and combines it [illegible]xhibit of a gross lack of com[illegible] in the purveyor. What's [illegible]hould be never offered.

If [illegible]ides are right, then there [illegible]s a wrong subject. Even grandchildren can be discussed if you have adequate detachment to sketch them as the little beasts they are. But, generally, the subjects of good conversation fall into three categories: ideas, information, and gossip.

Ideas may be distinguished from their duller cousins, opinions, in that ideas are living things to be pruned, forced to blossom, or grafted onto as they pass around the table. Whereas, opinions are dead sticks most often used in thrashing equally defunct equines. "Meryl Streep is able to portray a sexuality that goes beyond the confines of prurience." That's an idea. "Meryl Streep is overexposed." That's an opinion. Stick to ideas. They're, well, less opinionated-sounding.

Avoid jargon. Few computer experts would care to be addressed in Swahili, yet the same experts confound their listeners with "bytes," "floppy disks," and "core dumps."

Gossip is everyone's favorite subject. Of course, gossip is terrible. But so are all of us. No one is going to stop gossiping, so you may as well do it right. Never gossip about people you don't know. This is stealing bread from the mouths of simple artisans such as Suzy or Rona Barrett. Also, it gives others the impression that the people you do know are a pretty dull lot. Announce your gossip with a straight face. Sophistication does not admit to surprise, and knowledge of human nature should preclude disappointment. And present all scandals in a forthright and unexaggerated form. Some degree of honesty must be present in conversation or it lapses into a lower form of art, such as literature.

Good conversation may be thought assured by lively people, smart attitudes, and topics sufficiently worthwhile or sufficiently otherwise. But anything can be spoiled by technique.

There must be a rhythm of exchange among the guests. Everyone must make a contribution even if that contribution is only a pretended inability to swallow a mouthful of soup because of the stunning nature of what's been said. No one should ever be excluded. Nothing is more disgusting than five people talking intimately about something a sixth person has never heard of. You might as well invite that person to

dinner and not serve him food. There should be no extended duets unless only two people are present. You should have no honeymoon couples (marital, commercial, or other) at your table. And there should be no seductions evident. Flirtations may be rampant, but they should be public and tend to the amusement, or astonishment, anyway, of the whole company.

Ideally one guest should have a say; there should be general response; the first guest should make rebuttal or retraction; and the floor should pass to someone else. When it does so, the subject should also change at least slightly. Francis Bacon, in his seventeenth-century essay "Of Discourse," said, "The honourablest part of talk is to give the occasion; and again to moderate and pass to somewhat else; for then a man leads the dance."

Changes of tone and style should be as frequent as changes of speaker and subject. Anecdote should not pile on anecdote but be mixed with observation, quip, hypothesis, question, etc. This is not just for the sake of variety. In conversation, unlike bridge, it's bad taste to follow suit. If Miss A mentions that she knows an actress with 240 pairs of shoes, only a beast would let on that he's met a countess who owns 300. It is your duty as host to mitigate such trespasses. You have to say something to the effect, "Yes, the countess does own 300 pairs of shoes. But her father was so impoverished by European tax laws that he was forced to marry a wealthy insect, and, therefore, the lady in question has six feet."

It is, in fact, your duty to see to the smooth running of all conversational machinery. In a perfect situation this means nothing but keeping the glasses full. But usually you also need to curtail monopolization by the skilled, solicit participation from the dull, and excuse that participation to the spirited. You must dress nettled pride with compliments, remove people's feet from their mouths, and, if an argument gets completely out of hand, you have to pretend the maid just had a baby in the kitchen.

Remember that trick. You're also the person who will eventually have to make everyone shut up and go home. □



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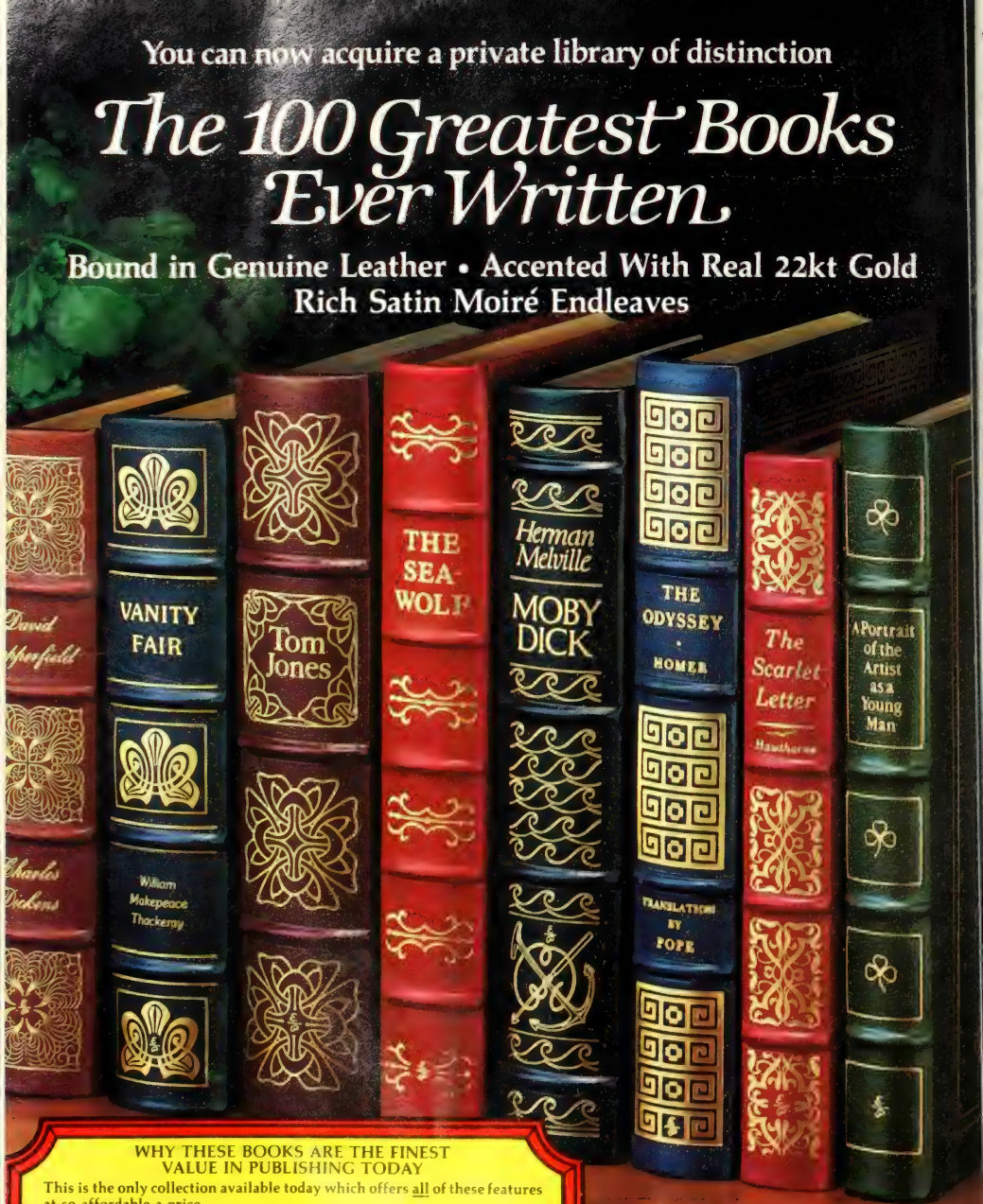


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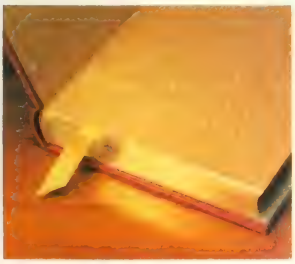
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FROM BAUHAUS TO THEIR HOUSE

The goal of Arthur and Elaine Lustig Cohen's paper chase is finding books that document the heroic vision of Early Modernism

By Martin Filler

America's foremost collection of works on paper documenting the revolutionary art and architecture of the twentieth century is not, as one might have expected, at the Museum of Modern Art, but rather a mile north of it, at Ex Libris, the New York gallery owned by Arthur Cohen and his wife, Elaine Lustig Cohen. The Cohens are examples of that most remarkable form of art dealer: the self-taught expert who virtually defines a previously unappreciated area of collecting. Curiously, the same ten-year period during which the Cohens have had their gallery has also witnessed the widespread reevaluation (and attempted repudiation) of the Modern Movement. But if Modernism is dead, then don't send condolences to the Cohens, for their extensive holdings—the printed matter of the Bauhaus, Russian Constructivism, Futurism, De Stijl, Dadaism, Surrealism, and a host of mini-movements on the fringes of the avant-garde—have simultaneously skyrocketed in value, largely because of the Cohens' development of a new constituency of collectors for those long-neglected artifacts.

The Cohens more or less sidled into the rare-book business, but books and their design have been a family affair for the past 35 years. In 1948 Elaine married Alvin Lustig, one of the most gifted graphics designers of his generation. Shortly thereafter they met Arthur Cohen, who co-founded the Noonday Press in 1951 and Meridian Books in 1954. At the time Cohen was, by his own admission, "a visual idiot," and he turned to the Lustigs for guidance in designing his small but imaginative list of titles. Cohen recalls that Alvin Lustig believed "that one could not design well without access to the whole of the culture," and their mutually stimulating collaboration was one of the high points of American book publishing in the 1950s. But by 1955 the forty-year-old Lustig had become



fatally ill with complications from diabetes. One of his final wishes was that his wife and friend should eventually marry; they did so the following year.

In 1960, Cohen sold Meridian to the World Publishing Company for a healthy profit and eventually became editor-in-chief of the general books division at Holt, Rinehart and Winston, a post he resigned in a dispute with the company's president over Elaine Lustig Cohen's dust-jacket designs. Cohen then decided to devote himself full-time to his writing (he is the author of thirteen books, including a study of the philosopher Martin Buber and the critically acclaimed 1973 novel *In the Days of Simon Stern*); his wife gave up her graphics-design practice to concentrate on her art (she has had a dozen one-woman exhibitions).

During the early 1970s, however, the Cohens began to have to dip into capital and at tax time in 1974 experienced what Cohen calls "a cash shortfall." To make ends meet, they decided

Opposite: Ex Libris features a dazzling array of avant-garde art and architecture publications, including *Wendingen* (top center, cover by El Lissitzky) and *L'Esprit nouveau* (edited by Le Corbusier). *Above:* Ephemera and typographic specimens are another Ex Libris specialty. *Below:* Arthur Cohen in his gallery.



to sell some of the rare early-modern books they had been collecting, the first of which was a copy Elaine had given Arthur of F. T. Marinetti's *Les Mots en liberté futuristes,* a 1919 booklet that an Ex Libris catalogue has termed "the prodigy of Futurist typographic experimentation." In examining their collections, the Cohens not only realized that they had accumulated some fifty items in duplicate, but also that they knew more about what they had than most generalist book dealers. The three greatest specialists in early-modern books were the dealers Hans Bolliger in Zürich, Jürgen Holstein near Munich, and John Vloemans in The Hague; but with the exception of the pioneering and eccentric George Wittenborn in New York, the Cohens' competition in America was virtually nonexistent. Thus they drew up a price list, had it mimeographed, and placed a one-inch ad in *The New York Times.* They had 67 inquiries within a week; *(Continued on page 32)*

(Continued from page 31) within a month their sales were $13,000, and they were thereby launched on a new career.

Their clientele grew rapidly. Among their customers have been several leading architects, including Richard Meier (a close friend of Arthur Cohen, who was best man at Meier's wedding) and Philip Johnson (who bought a copy of the book documenting the 1922 *Chicago Tribune* Building competition); Yoko Ono (who purchased a 1934 Olivetti poster by Xanthi Schawinsky); the graphics designers Paul Rand and Lou Danziger; and a long list of prestigious institutions, including the Bibliothèque Nationale, the British Museum, the Tate Gallery, the Houghton Library at Harvard, and the Avery Architectural Library at Columbia.

In the light of the gallery's great success, the irony of trying to consign Modernism to a premature grave is not lost on the 55-year-old Arthur Cohen, whose boyish enthusiasm is the antithesis of the "seen-it-all-before-twice" jadedness of so many other art dealers. "How can we have Post Modernism," he asks, "when in this country we don't even yet know what Modernism was?" The answers to that rhetorical question can be found among the nearly ten thousand paper objects of all descriptions at Ex Libris—books, magazines, catalogues, pamphlets, posters, photographs, manuscripts, letters, and postcards—which were the veritable seeds of Modernism. In those works the medium truly is the message, for those artistic calls to arms were designed in startling new styles of typography and layout devised to rouse Europe from its narcissistic rapture as the nineteenth century gave way to the twentieth.

But in addition to the famous manifestoes and public proclamations, Ex Libris also handles items that reveal the private side of the modern revolution, reminding us that the supposedly uncompromising supermen behind it were really quite human after all. Such mementos have included Paul Klee's primly engraved, supremely bourgeois calling card, indistinguishable from that of any Zürich banker; the Dutch architect Gerrit Rietveld's 1919 sketch for an angular De Stijl crib, a baby gift to his colleague J. J. P. Oud, who was too broke at the time to have it built; and a monograph inscribed by its usually reserved subject "To Alfred Barr/ who inspired every building/in the book, who indeed inspired/the whole idea of becoming an architect/from his devoted and admiring/friend/Philip Johnson."

The involving human element is also transmitted via the exceptionally fine catalogues published by Ex Libris, which the Cohens accurately acknowledge to be the single most important element in their firm's success. Informative, opinionated, and eminently readable, the catalogues have become basic guides for both dealers and collectors. The real turning point for Ex Libris, as both a business and a scholarly enterprise, was the publication in 1977 of *Constructivism & Futurism: Russian & Other,* offering an extraordinary collection of almost eight hundred items, including the extensive Russian avant-garde collection the Cohens bought "for six figures" from a Paris dealer. Researched by art historian Gail Harrison Roman, a leading expert in early-twentieth-century Russian art, the catalogue is now regarded as a seminal reference work in that still largely uncharted field. Arthur Cohen recalls with amusement the reaction of the Soviet press: "They ran articles urging, *'Tovarishchi,* check your attics for books!' "



Their art belongs to Dada: a 1923 poster for *Kleine Dada Soirée* by Kurt Schwitters and Theo van Doesburg.

If the seriousness of Ex Libris's catalogues was a crucial factor in the gallery's quick acceptance by a discerning nucleus of collectors in the design professions, then so has been the firm's continuing abundance of bargains, especially if book prices are compared to those of the art market as a whole. For example, high-ticket items at Ex Libris have included Sonia Delaunay and Blaise Cendrars's six-and-a-half-foot-long fold-out book of 1913, *La Prose du Transsibérien et de la petite Jehanne de France,* for $19,000 (another copy recently fetched $27,000 at auction in London) and the Marcel Duchamp multiple *Boîte en valise* (containing miniature reproductions of the artist's best-known works) at $12,000. But Ex Libris also stocks hundreds of books and magazines for less than $50, many for less than $20. As Arthur Cohen observes, "You could still buy all the absolute masterpieces of the Modern Movement for less than $100,000 total. You can't even buy a third-rate Picasso for that anymore."

But Cohen isn't nostalgic for the days when he offered choice works at a fraction of the prices they now command. "Why should I be?" he asks. "We put ourselves on the line by identifying these as key parts of our visual culture, but those evaluations would not have held had those works not been as important as we said they were. There are many booksellers who hate us passionately, both for our taking a stand and for our pricing. But it's still possible for a specialist in a field to get the best of us. We can't know everything, but we do know a very great deal about a lot."

Central to the operation of Ex Libris are the Cohens' two young associates, W. Michael Sheehe and Everett Potter, in whose hands much of the day-to-day business rests. Both have become knowledgeable bibliographers, and their encyclopedic memories for clients' diverse wants lists are impressive. "They allow me the time to do my writing," admits Cohen, whose new novel, *An Admirable Woman,* will be published by David *(Continued on page 34)*

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(Continued from page 32) R. Godine this fall. Sheehe and Potter have also been instrumental in the expansion of the gallery's exhibition program (including a stunning show of Russian revolutionary posters and an exhibition of original Bauhaus furniture discovered in a garage near Düsseldorf) and are at work on a forthcoming book, *The Movement and the Book in Twentieth-Century Art,* in honor of the tenth anniversary of Ex Libris.

Located on the ground floor of a town house on a tree-lined East Side street, Ex Libris is open on an appointment-only basis. Cohen, a religious Jew, keeps his business closed in observance of the Sabbath on Saturday, the busiest day of the week for art dealers. This has been known to drive some impatient acquisitors into a frenzy, as recently happened when an Ex Libris catalogue was mailed just before a three-day hiatus that included Yom Kippur, extending the agonizing wait for clients to find out if a coveted item had been sold yet.

But the Cohens maintain a much calmer attitude about what passes through their hands. Although they have a superb private collection, "we never buy for ourselves in competition with the business," says Elaine Lustig Cohen. Her husband explains, "You get eye-burn. You see so much that you begin to know what you'll see again and also what you'll not be seeing again." They have an escape clause, though. If a particular object they like remains unsold through two catalogue publications, they will run it once again with the warning notice, "appearing for the third and final time," after which, if it still does not find a buyer, they will acquire it for themselves.

On the title page of their landmark Russian Constructivism catalogue is a quotation in French by Guillaume Apollinaire that reveals how the Cohens view their joint career. In translation it reads, "There are the prospectuses, the catalogues, the posters, which sing out loud, there is poetry, and for prose there are the newspapers." Arthur and Elaine Lustig Cohen understand the silent song of the things they buy and sell, and in doing so are keeping alive a fragile and precious part of a century in which the lyric voice has often been drowned out by darker dissonances. □

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ON THE STORMY SHORES OF LOCH FYNE

One of Scotland's clansmen
tells why his heart's in the highlands
By Sir Fitzroy Maclean





Left: Sir Fitzroy dressed in his tartans at Strachur.
Right: A view of Strachur House, built in 1783, from the back, with the roses in bloom.

No doubt most people think the place where they live the most beautiful or at any rate the most appealing place on earth. I certainly am convinced that there is nowhere to match the county of Argyll in the Western Highlands of Scotland or, to give it its full title, Argyll and the Isles. To say there was something special about Argyllshire would be an understatement. I [illegible] those who like it least, who cannot stand the weather, who regard the scenery as overrated and us inhabitant as idle and devious, have to admit that at least it is different. The people are different and so, for that matter, are the climate and the scenery. Looking out, as I write, across a tremendous prospect of sea and sky and rain-washed hills and listening to the sound of the soft West Highlands voices that so effectively prevent me from concentrating, I know for sure that I would not wish to live anywhere else in the world.

Argyll takes its name from the Gaelic *Oirer Ghaidheal* ("Coastland of the Gael"). This is where between the third and sixth centuries of our era successive waves of Celts from the kingdom of Dalriada in Ireland landed to establish a second Dalriada across the sea. They called themselves Scoti or Scots, being descended, or so they claimed, from a pharaoh's daughter, [illegible] who had somehow reached Ireland from the Nile Valley a good many centuries before. In due course they gave their name to the whole country, which, known as Alba, came to be called Scotland. Only Argyll has remained a Celtic heartland, retaining a quality, a tradition, and, in the Gaelic tongue, a language all its own.

Twenty miles due west from where I write, the great rock of Dunadd rises steeply from the surrounding water meadows. Fifteen centuries ago this was a stronghold of the newly arrived Scots and capital of Scottish Dalriada. To this day you may see near its summit, carved out of the living rock, a stone basin and the mark of a human foot. Here, after ceremonial purification, the old kings of Dalriada were crowned. Nearby is the carving of a boar, the heraldic emblem of these early monarchs. In the green hilly countryside around Dunadd carved stones and ancient shrines give a feeling of timeless antiquity, *(Continued on page 40)*

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"From the highest of the hills behind the house you can see out beyond Kintyre to the open sea and 'the tangle of the Isles,' including my own rock of Dunconnel...again safely in Maclean hands"

(Continued from page 36) while off the coast Iona and the other islands of the Inner Hebrides are rich in memories of Columba and those other holy men, who centuries ago first brought Christianity to Scotland. While eastern and central Scotland soon fell under Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman influence, Argyll and the Western Highlands, thanks to their remoteness, the ruggedness of the terrain, and the ferocity of their inhabitants, stubbornly retained their original Celtic character, diluted only by the Viking invasions, which from the ninth century persisted for several hundred years.

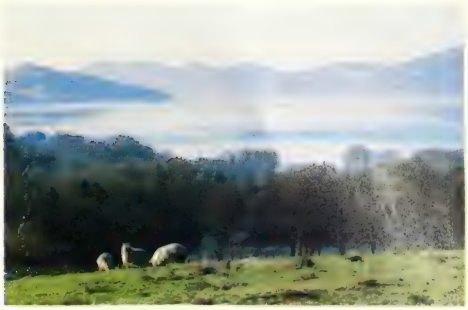
From this heady mix of Norseman and Celt sprang the Macdonald Lords of the Isles, who from their castle of Ardtornish ruled in the Middle Ages over an independent kingdom comprising the Hebrides and much of the neighboring coastland. To their rising star my own ancestor, Lachlan the Wily, fifth Chief of Clan Maclean, was quick to hitch his wagon. Enterprising and resourceful by nature, Lachlan carried off Good John, First Lord of the Isles, in his galley to the rock fortress of Dunconnel in the Isles of the Sea and there held him a prisoner until he had sworn him eternal friendship, entrusted him with a number of strategically situated islands, including Dunconnel, and, last but not least, accorded him his daughter's hand in marriage. From this happy union I am myself directly descended, while to Good John's enforced generosity I owe the honorable though not very exacting office of Hereditary Keeper and Captain of Dunconnel.



Above: The front of Strachur House. *Below left:* View of Loch Fyne from above the house. *Below right:* The Creggans Inn from Loch Fyne.

With the downfall of the Lords of the Isles and the meteoric rise of Clan Campbell, the Macleans fell on difficult times, losing over the centuries a great part of what they possessed. Their stubborn loyalty to the Stuart cause in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries landed them in worse trouble still. Nevertheless today we still have a foothold, indeed much more than a foothold, in Argyll, consisting partly of lands clung to through the centuries, like the mountain fastness of Ardgour, and partly of territory regained, like Duart Castle on the Isle of Mull, by the descendants of the original Maclean chiefs.

For my wife and myself and our children, our own village of Strachur is the most important place in the world. The house we live in, "an elegant large house," says the Statistical Account of 1792, stands a little way back from the shore, looking out across the sometimes sunlit, sometimes storm-tossed waters of Loch Fyne to the Campbell stronghold of Inverary and the green hills of Kintyre. From the highest of the hills behind the house you can on a fine day see out beyond Kintyre to the open sea and "the tangle of the Isles," including my own rock of Dunconnel, now, after an interval of three hundred years, again safely in Maclean hands. On our five *(Continued on page 42)*







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(Continued from page 40) thousand acres of hill land we raise hardy Blackface sheep and some cattle. "The hills," writes the Statistician of 1792, "afford excellent pasture for sheep and black cattle. The meadows in warm, rainy seasons give good crops of hay. The air is pure and healthy, although a great quantity of rain falls on the hills and valleys. The rheumatism affects people of different ranks and in different situations, owing no doubt to the moisture and the variableness of the climate . . . the Gaelic language is universally spoken in this Parish. Many of the natives can speak no other language." After two hundred years much remains the same. Gaelic, though no longer universally spoken, is still taught in the village school, the air is still pure and healthy, the rain, with frequent sunny intervals, still falls on the hills and valleys and some of us, regardless of rank or station, still suffer occasional twinges of rheumatism.

Our house and its policies lie between what were once two or three separate hamlets. The main village, or *clachan*, clusters round the church, built in the eighteenth century to replace the old pre-Reformation church, which stood a mile or two away on the river bank in a field still known as Chapel Field, which over the years has yielded to the plough numerous ancient Celtic gravestones and other fragments. Strachur abounds in archaeological sites. A famous vitrified fort stands near the house, while in the field in front of it lies what was once one of a circle of standing stones but which now provides seats for watchers of the ancient Celtic game of shinty, played almost daily with unflagging enthusiasm up and down the field. Near the church is the Manse, built in 1780 and haunted by the dripping ghost of an imprudent traveler, who, disregarding local advice, foolishly tried to cross Loch Fyne in a gale and was consequently drowned.

On the south side of Strachur the name Glensluain, or "Glen of the People," recalls a time when the narrow glen was full of people, of whose houses only a few stones remain today. Here, as elsewhere in the Highlands, sheep took the place of people, many of whom made their way to North America. But a few found employment



TRAVEL

as fishermen, settling in a row of neat cottages around Strachur Bay.

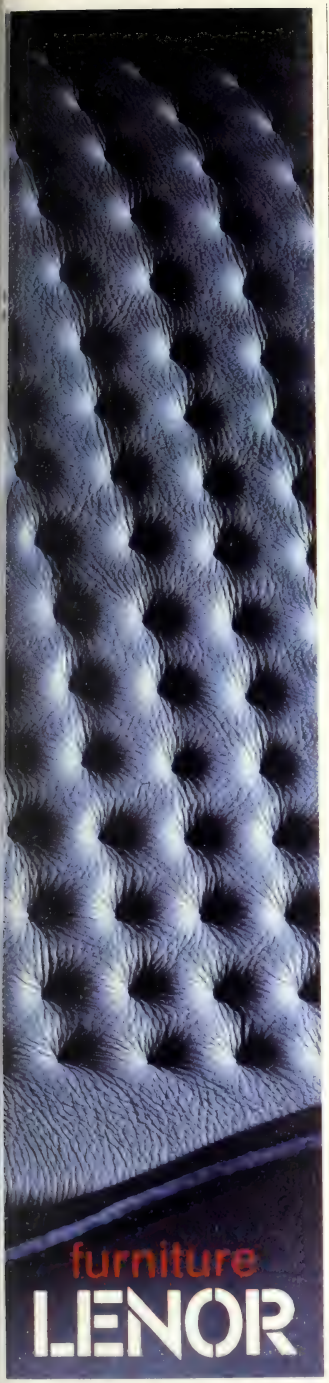
A mile farther north are the remains of a pier built a century ago for steamers, then the main means of transport. Long before the pier was built, Creggans (from the Gaelic *creagan*, a crag), as this part of Strachur is known, was a regular landing place for boats, being linked by ferry to a village of the same name on the other side of the loch.

On the shore a little to the north of Creggans the map shows the site of MacPhunn's Cairn. MacPhunn of Drip was a local laird who, having fallen on hard times, took to stealing sheep, for which he was carried off to Inverary on the other side of Loch Fyne and hanged. His widow was then

"Strachur abounds in archaeological sites. A famous vitrified fort stands near the house, while in the field in front of it lies what was once a circle of standing stones"

invited to come and collect his body. This she did by boat. Halfway across the loch she thought she saw the body move. She was nursing a baby. Shaking up some of her own milk with a little whisky, she forced a few drops between the corpse's lips. At this MacPhunn stirred and sat up in the boat and a few minutes later landed, as good as new, at the cairn that bears his name. Under the law he could not be hanged twice. His neck was somewhat dislocated, but otherwise he was none the worse for his experience, lived happily at Drip for many more years, and now lies buried in Strachur churchyard under a stone neatly inscribed, "Burying place of the MacPhunn of Drip."

Across the road from the pier, looking out over the loch at the exact spot where, an inscription tells us, Mary Queen of Scots landed on July 26, 1563, stands the Creggans Inn. Twenty-five years ago its landlady, Mrs.



Mackechnie, retired from business. The inn already belonged to me and, being interested in such things, my wife and I decided to take it over and run it ourselves. It was (and still is) a not-very-large West Highlands inn. While careful to keep its original character, we have set out to add a new dimension of comfort and sophistication and seriously improve the quality of the food and drink. My wife (whose cookbooks are best-sellers) looks after the food, her aim being to provide our guests with the best of Scottish country-house cooking, in short, the kind of food we like ourselves. I concentrate on the drink. Loch Fyne derives its name—"the loch of the Vine"—from the cargoes of rare French wines that were once landed there, without benefit of Customs. Though now, unfortunately, we need to pay duty, this is a tradition that I take great pains to maintain, adding for luck some of the fine single-malt whiskies to which I am myself addicted. Meanwhile, Veronica, who is a skillful, if extravagant, interior decorator, has made the public rooms and bedrooms as much as possible like rooms in a comfortable country house.

The village is vital to the inn. Most of our staff are local, and the Creggans remains a center of village life, where local worthies rub shoulders and swap drams with expatriate Scots from all over the world, while, with our own pipe band and some good local Gaelic singers, our *ceilidhs* (or sing-alongs) leave even our long-suffering English visitors in no doubt that they are now in the heart of the Highlands.

Had anyone told me when I was younger that in the course of time one of my principal preoccupations in life would be innkeeping, I should have been greatly surprised. But that is what has happened. Readers of Robert Louis Stevenson will recall how in *Kidnapped* the hero came to "an inn with an innkeeper who was a Maclean of very high family; for to keep an inn is thought even more genteel in the Highlands than it is with us, perhaps as partaking of hospitality; or perhaps because the trade is idle and drunken." Whichever view you take, most people who have tried it find innkeeping fascinating. I certainly have never regretted the decision I took 25 years ago.



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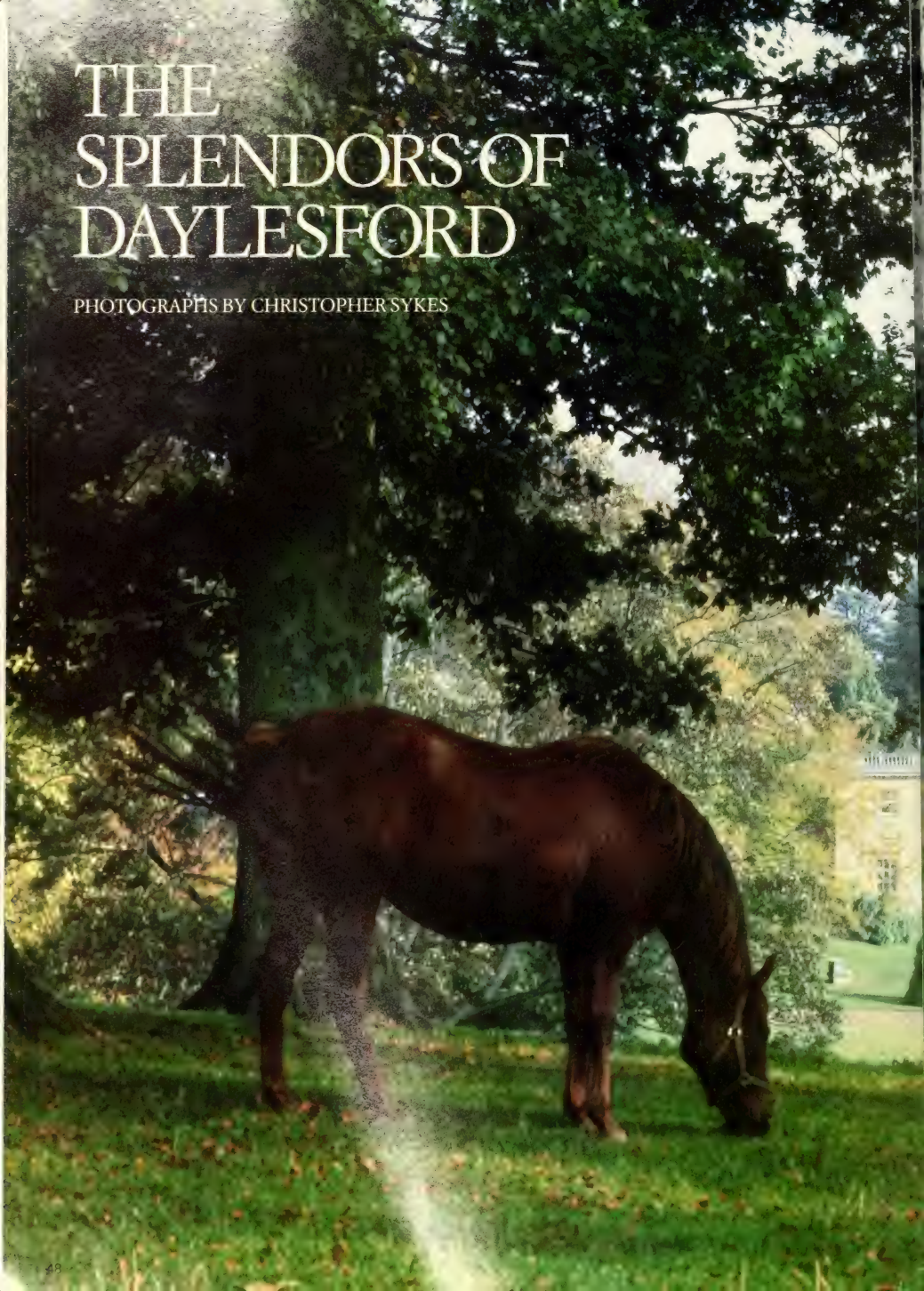
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THE SPLENDORS OF DAYLESFORD

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISTOPHER SYKES





The English Country House of the Thyssen-Bornemiszas

BY JOHN BOWES-LYON



Preceding pages: The house from the south, with a yearling raised at Daylesford. *Right:* In the library, Picasso's *Harlequin with Mirror,* 1923, hangs above a marble chimney piece by John Bacon, symbolizing the course of the Thames. Sofas are covered in nineteenth-century Turkish brocade embroidered with white silk. Cameo-style frieze with Pompeiian theme painted by Irene Carcano. Sculpture of champion sprinter, *Double Form,* by John Skeaping. *Above:* Mr. and Mrs. Warren Hastings painted by Johann Zoffany.

The Cotswolds, the limestone countryside between Oxford and Stratford-upon-Avon, contain some of the finest houses and gardens in England. Not least of these is Daylesford near Moreton-in-Marsh, the house of Baron and Baroness Hans Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza.

Baron and Baroness Thyssen chose in Daylesford a house with a strange and romantic history. It was built for Warren Hastings, the most celebrated of the nabobs and the first Governor General of India.

When Baron and Baroness Thyssen bought Daylesford in 1977 they entrusted the redecoration of the house to Renzo Mongiardino, who worked there for over a year. In an age of vanishing craftsmen he is one of a fast-disappearing breed, famed for his attention to painstaking detail and for employing the highly talented team of painters, gilders, and stencilers from Italy, France, and even Russia.

His main workshop is in Milan, where everything is prepared. The materials, whether for walls, curtains, or sofas, are then sent off to be finished by hand on location. Members of the Doubujinsky family have worked for a long time with Mongiardino. Originally designers of theatrical scenery in czarist Russia, they settled in Paris in the 1920s. For Renzo Mongiardino, "they are magicians who can make new silk look old, simulate stone and marble as in Venetian churches, and even make other materials look like old leather." The dining room at Daylesford is an example: it was inspired by the interior of a Venetian church painted by Damasceno.

From the beginning Baron Thyssen had a good idea of which pictures he wished to hang eventually in the main downstairs rooms, and for the most part this influenced the decoration of those rooms. "Impressionist pictures," according to Mongiardino, "are tricky to show off to advantage. They normally look better on a red or dark-color background—not against white." It is by complete chance, however, that the colors in the library—purple-and-blue-striped silk—match the colors of the 1923 Picasso portrait, *Harlequin with Mirror,* that hangs over the chimney piece—it was not purchased until 1979, after the room had been completed.

In the card room the walls are covered with white tiles that look as if they have come straight out of a mosque. They are in fact made of plastic, another trick of Mongiardino's to make something new seem old.

There is no doubt the stenciling in relief of some cornices and niches and the stars and crescents painted onto the curtains suggest an Oriental influence. But the new decoration of Daylesford does not try to re-create the house as it was in Hastings's time.







Opposite: The Orangerie is similar to that at Serlincote; both were designed by Samuel Pepys Cockerell. *This page*: The exuberant eighteenth-century French silver tureen is one of a pair made by J. A. Meissonier for the Duke of Kingston. The swan is in The Cleveland Museum of Art.

THE DOMED ROOM

Opposite: Two paintings by Peter Paul Rubens—a portrait of a woman on the left and a sketch, *The Blinding of Samson,* above the banquette—hang in the Domed Room on the first floor of Daylesford. *Above* A classic English library table, circa 1840, is covered with books on the Baron's favorite subject: art. The table is flanked by unusual mahogany chairs inlaid with brass and made in Russia in 1800. The pair of English globes are late Victorian. *Below:* Detail of the ceiling painted by Mongiardino's craftsmen.









THE TOP FLOOR

Right: The walls of Baroness Thyssen's bedroom are covered with fabric custom-made in India for Mongiardino. On the left of the bed, a race-course scene by Toulouse-Lautrec. French window opens onto a balcony that overlooks garden and valley. *Above:* A heavily curtained bedroom passageway gives the impression of walking through a number of small rooms. On the walls hang costume and set designs painted by Bakst for Diaghilev's Ballet Russe.



Treasures from the World's Greatest Private Art Collection

BY BARBARA ROSE



What happens when you match a great fortune to a great eye to a great passion for art? Not surprisingly, you end up with the finest and most famous collection of painting and sculpture in the world. The legendary collection in question is that of the multimillionaire industrialist and connoisseur Baron Hans Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza. The Baron was, to badly mix a metaphor, to the masterpiece born. Brought up to love art by his father, who began the great Thyssen-Bornemisza museum-quality collection, he has vastly expanded and improved it by the addition of new works, especially Italian old masters, nineteenth-century American landscape paintings, and an impressive selection of masterpieces of modern art. Unlike the majority of private collectors, who are reluctant to share their treasures, Baron Thyssen, who travels all over the globe supervising his international economic empire, wants others to share the pleasure he obviously enjoys in viewing the great art he has collected. Most of the Baron's collection is housed in the painting gallery attached to the Thyssen family home, the Villa Favorita, in Lugano, Switzerland. It was his father who built the Pinacoteca adjacent to the villa in 1930, but it was he who opened it to the public as a proper museum after his father's death.

However, the Baron only lives in Lugano several months during the year. His other main residence is Daylesford, the great eighteenth-century English manor house he bought in 1977. Daylesford does not have a gallery whose sole purpose is to show art. Daylesford is the Baron's private retreat, a place to relax and take his youngest son, who attends school in England, to enjoy country life. Very much his creation, Daylesford is decorated with furniture and objects he himself has acquired. Some of his favorite paintings hang in Daylesford, and he changes them to suit his taste. Like all really involved collectors, the Baron likes to handle his paintings, sometimes stacking up new purchases for review in the Cinema Room before deciding where to hang them: at Daylesford, the pictures seem literally "at home"; they provide the background for a warm and lively social life rather than seeming a "collection." The choice of art at Daylesford is eclectic: a Picasso harlequin may hang in the same room with a Toulouse-Lautrec portrait and a sculpture of a horse by the English academic artist John Skeaping. The mixture of old and

Right: In the long gallery, a group of musicians by the Caravaggesque painter Gentileschi hangs above some of Baron Thyssen's seventeenth-century bronzes. Red-and-gold-striped silk damask on the wall was acquired by the Baron in Venice. *Above:* Carved stone swags embellish a door leading from a rooftop terrace.







THE LONG GALLERY

The seventeenth-century landscape painting by the Italian Salvator Rosa over the chimney piece in the long gallery faces Caravaggio's *Saint Catherine of Alexandria*, bought by the Baron's father from the Barberini Collection in 1935. In addition to the paintings, the long gallery also contains part of Baron Thyssen's collections of Russian silver and vermeil, and of Renaissance and Baroque bronzes. The table in the left foreground is late-eighteenth-century Chinese lacquer, made for the European market.





modern masters, however, does not seem jarring, as it might in a museum. And that is just the point: Daylesford is very much a private home, not a public museum.

The art that decorates this house is, like everything the Baron acquires, extremely personal. Sometimes his choices seem eccentric. For example, hanging in his bedroom is Vincent Van Gogh's last painting, a disturbing expressionistic work executed shortly before the troubled artist committed suicide. In the enclosed garden room, on the other hand, there is a Balthus painting of a typically erotic scene of two adolescents, *The Card Players*.

The Baron rehangs the paintings in his houses as he acquires new works, which he does constantly. Although most of the world-famous masterpieces of the Thyssen-Bornemisza collection are at the Villa Favorita, Daylesford is not without its gems. The house itself is treated like a setting for these precious treasures of Western art. Since London is an auction center and the Baron often buys at auction (asking everyone's opinion and taking no one's advice, as one observer commented), some paintings spend only a short sojourn at Daylesford before becoming part of the picture gallery at Lugano or going on tour as part of the Baron's program of exhibiting his collection, especially in places where his many employees work.

Appropriately, one of the grandest spaces at Daylesford, the atrium court, or garden hall, is permanently occupied by the works of the great French nine-

THE CINEMA ROOM

Designed by Mongiardino as a place to show movies—the silhouette frieze comments on them—the Cinema Room has been turned into an impromptu storage room for paintings. From the left, a 1934 Picasso next to Titian's *Danaë*; in center of the room resting on the chair, an 1891 Boudin; at right on the floor, *Rider on a White Horse*, painted in 1941 by Balthus.

teenth-century sculptor Auguste Rodin. The Baron's grandfather, August Thyssen, who founded the family fortune, was a personal friend as well as patron of Rodin's. It was daring to buy Rodin at the time, and the current Baron has acquired a reputation as a collector who dares to challenge taste, even that of art experts. Thus, the taste for art has been in the Thyssen family for three generations. Keeping the Rodins at Daylesford is a way of commemorating this fact. The current Baron Thyssen-Bornemisza has a keen sense of family history as well as art history. His first purchases were made from his relatives after his father's death dispersed the collection. This permitted him to reconstitute the collection his father had formed, before going on to expand and refine it. These works hang in the Pinacoteca of the Villa Favorita in Lugano. Daylesford, on the other hand, is entirely the Baron's own creation. He was involved in all details of its decoration, including the choice of fabrics and wallpaper. His enormous silver collection, which is now being catalogued for exhibition, is also in storage there.

In a country where horseback riding and hunting are the favorite sports of the aristocracy, it is amusing that Baron Thyssen treats art collecting as his major sport, "hunting" masterpieces that once belonged to the greatest houses of Europe, much in the spirit that the English gentry might ride to the hounds. Once a champion horseman, the Baron has explained why he prefers art hunting to fox hunting: "Horses are dangerous at both ends, uncomfortable in the middle, and a

Text continued on page 166



"THE CARD PLAYERS" BY BALTHUS

Balthus's *The Card Players* is in the garden room at Daylesford.



KINGDOM BY THE SEA

South of San Francisco, Ron Mann builds and rebuilds his largest work of art

PHOTOGRAPHS
BY RUSSELL MACMASTERS

Artist and designer Ron Mann lives on visual happenstance. Wherever he is, his ravenous eye ranges, choosing instantly what is beautiful to him: tough little wildflowers that grow in roadside ditches, worn gray planks cast on his shore by the Pacific, a cogwheel from the trash pile of an abandoned mill. But he is far more complex than the California Natural Man these tastes suggest, also delighting in a shining cluster of Mexican mercury-glass bubbles or an extravagant heap of fat white pillows and insisting on refinements like the piano hinges on his closet doors.

Happenstance found Ron Mann his house. While he was driving south from San Francisco one day in 1975, his eye was arrested by a glimpse of sea and mountain through the gate to a rundown four-room house being leased to a commune. Although it was carpeted with debris inside and out, Mann saw its potential and decided he had to live there. He pursued the owner until they closed the sale.

Ron Mann took the small square house, cleaned it up, and reshaped it and its surroundings. He ripped out walls, built them up in new places, bulldozed giant rock piles into better arrangements, carved out round windows, built in furniture, and troweled on stucco by the machine-load (from his own machine—he had to buy one). His aim is to make his house worthy of the roaring sea and brilliant sky and craggy cliffs of his bit of coastline, and although visitors think it is worthy of a Greek island, he is still working at it. □ *By Elaine Greene*



Rearranged boulders cup white canvas-covered cushions for a pair of unique sofas by a wind-pruned cypress







On the living-room floor of wood striped with concrete, which Ron Mann designed and executed, stands [illegible] surfaced dining table bearing his Cor-Ten steel candleholders (a squat candle is put on top).





Top: Living room's triangular bay for sea-watchers is part of Mann's expansion of the once-boxlike house, and all the huge windows are new. White stucco clads seat bases. *Above:* Across the room, Mexican leather chairs draped in sheepskin.





Top Floor's masonry [illegible] the pale, spare living room, forms a herringbone where lines converge. Hanging eucalyptus bark lies across the mantel of the room's fireplace. Mexican [illegible] chairs came from a defunct bathhouse.



Opposite: Newly created front hall with "moon window" holds Mann's Cor-Ten steel sculpture, Chinese tea shipping box, ancient Roman basin [illegible]
This page: Entry's smaller window relates in size to wine-press bottom found in the weeds. [illegible] yielded mound of smooth beach glass.







Top: Lower-level study centers on Ron Mann's Mesa table, whose top of soft leather is fastened to a stump base by iron staples; Mexican orangewood chairs, an American Indian skin-drying rack. *Above:* Sea side of study has stucco-surfaced built-ins big enough to nap on.







Top. Mann's quarter-round desk and on it his "two-dimensional" [illegible] with water tube in back. *Above, left.* Another beach find, a whale's skull. [illegible] bound-up kindling, Majorcan troughs and basins that Mann bought [illegible]



Masai-style luxe in the bedroom: fir-column headboard, masses of pillows, a banana palm at the foot. Bedside lamp, a grain crusher recast from a Majorcan original, is part of his furnishings line.



SUMMER

BY FRANCINE DU PLESSIX GRAY

The Painting: How beautiful it is, and how utterly opposite to everything I associate with summer. The lady is alone, and in a state of fine tranquility. There are no pets or children about, no guests, no crowds demanding to be fed. She is clearly at home in the country, yet nothing suggests that she is victimized by the compulsion to wrench victuals from her land. A proliferation of textures and domestic artifacts, reminiscent of Vuillard's interiors, heightens her independence from the green world throbbing at her window. All here is stillness, intimacy, repose.

Summer as tranquility? Summer is reality on the warpath, mayhem and chaos, summer is a constant struggle to survive nature's pandemonium and the onslaught of human hordes.

My Summer Day A deeply troubled friend whom we've invited for a therapeutic country weekend is alternately laughing and weeping in an upstairs guest room. The vegetable garden is ominous with produce that will be unusable if not picked before dusk—beans approaching the size of small carrots, foot-long clubs of aggressive squashes. My children have reached that gregarious age (thirteen, fourteen) when they must be driven daily to swim with different friends whose houses are forty minutes' distance apart. For the third time this fortnight, a few ebullient, self-invited guests have arrived for an overnight stay ("We'll be driving by Cornwall on the way to the Cape"), and I've become an authority on the variety of ingredients—squid, pine nuts, fennel root—that can enliven that most serviceable Invasion Time fare, cold pasta.

The toilet that services most of the upstairs rooms has broken down; all local plumbers are on vacation; an acquaintance who is a breeder of poodles by profession, and has volunteered to fix the plumbing, arrives quite drunk at noon and grows drunker as he proceeds to remove the toilet from its base, leaving us with the added problem of how to remove his prostrate body from the bathroom floor. I am a fortnight late on the deadline for some article, a lapse of



The Room of Flowers, 1894, by Childe Hassam, oil on canvas. From the collection of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur G. Altschul.





THE CLIMBERS AND RAMBLERS OF NANTUCKET

BY HENRY MITCHELL

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERICA LENNARD





Opposite: American Pillar or Peggy Ann Landon rambler roses. *Above:* A climbing Marsh rose by Pierre-Joseph Redouté (1759–1840), who was the foremost French botanical illustrator of his time







Opposite: Dr. W. Van Fleet and offspring, New Dawn and Coral Creeper, on a fence. *Above:* Redouté's Tea Rose, brought to England from China around 1810, reaching America in 1828.

Opposite: A climber that may be Paul's Scarlet or Pike's Peak.
Below: Redouté's Blood Rose of China, first seen in England in 1800.



Roses are marvelous anywhere, of course, but never so much so as on an old picket fence, preferably painted gleaming white; or peering in the windows of a gray-shingled, weather-beaten house. Particularly on Nantucket, Martha's Vineyard, Cape Cod, and the coast of Maine the light seems so bright, and there the roses glow with more than their usual radiance; but even in the heavy fog, which often blows in suddenly from the sea, dulling their brightness, the roses appear as dense, muted pink clouds of color against an otherwise all-enveloping grayness. But times and roses are changing, even on Nantucket. Since the turn of the century you expected to see ramblers, and ramblers only, on these islands and along the more favored parts of the coast. Now, while the old ramblers are still there, you see more large-flowered climbers than you used to, and more of the modern roses.

But ramblers, to start with them, are *(Continued on page 142)*





Looking down from the mezzanine on the entrance of the new Warhol Factory. *Opposite:* Andy in the Boardroom at 860 Broadway.

OBLATO GILI



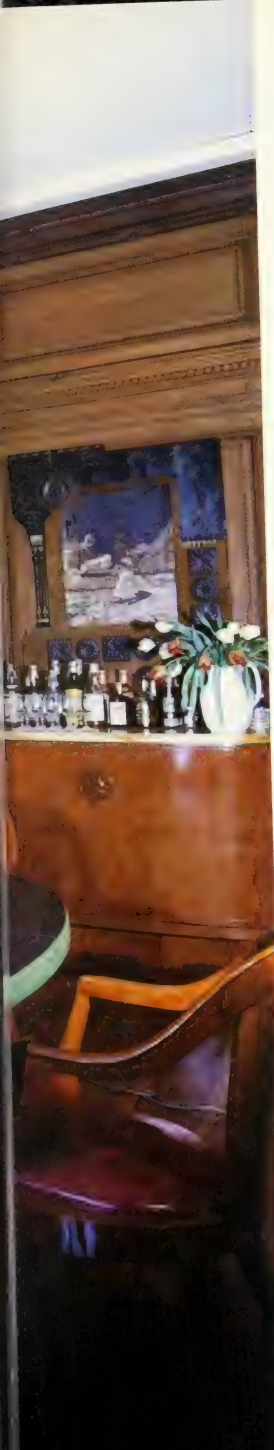
ANDY ON THE MOVE:

THE FACTORY FACTOR

BY JOHN RICHARDSON

PHOTOGRAPHS BY HORST







Left: The Boardroom with Irish Regency sideboard and above it a painting by Scottish Pre-Raphaelite David Forrester Wilson. Table (protected by a slate top), chairs, and sideboard cabinet, all by Jacques-Emile Ruhlmann. Painting on far wall was bought for its Bugatti frame, and a Bugatti pedestal stands in corner. *Above:* A moosehead, a present from John Richardson, flanked by East African sculptures.

Andy Warhol's moves from "Factory" to "Factory," as he calls his studios, have been reflected in abrupt changes of style and subject. In this respect, if no other, he reminds me of Picasso, whose successive "periods" were likewise triggered by domestic change. True, a change of mistress as opposed to studio, but then the former usually involved the latter.

Warhol's famous shoe advertisements for I. Miller conjure up memories of the Lexington Avenue brownstone that the artist shared with his mother in the late 1950s. Later (1962), when he started painting his breakthrough Coke bottles, Warhol moved (his studio, never his sacrosanct living quarters) to an old firehouse on East 87th Street. Within two years, however, the lease expired, and the artist was once more obliged to relocate, this time to a grimy industrial building—hence the "Factory" nickname—at 231 East 47th Street. This was the loft that became the launching pad for Pop art. According to Warhol's memoirs *(Popism: The Warhol Sixties),* his silver décor—so symptomatic of the sleazy sixties—was the idea of a spaced-out hermit, Billy Name, who later opted for a life of solitary confinement in the Factory's darkroom:

> [Billy] covered the crumbling walls and the pipes in different grades of silver foil. . . . He bought cans of silver paint and sprayed everything with it, right down to the toilet bowl . . . [silver] must have been an amphetamine thing. . . . But. . . it was the perfect time to think silver. Silver was the future, it was spacy—the astronauts. . . . And silver was also the past—the Silver Screen. . . . And maybe more than anything, silver was narcissism—mirrors were backed with silver.

Andy's silver walls and silver hair, silver Marilyns and silver Presleys, are what I most remember about the 47th Street Factory in its heyday. That and the din: *Turandot* at full blast drowning out "She wore blue velvet"; and the "Superstars": Ultra Violet, Viva, and Joe Dallesandro; and the Speed-freaks: Rotten Rita and, saddest of them all, poor hell-bent Edie Sedgwick decked out in spandex, velvet, and bits of broken mirror. No wonder the attrition rate was astronomical: within three or four years virtually everyone except Andy had burnt him or herself out. And no wonder Paul Morrissey, the man most responsible for Andy's involvement in movies, decided that the factory should be cleaned up and divid-



Right: French flea market chandelier and a French Art Deco brass desk. On the left, a portrait of Mrs. Marge Cowen and two of illustrator Antonio Lopez. To the right, portraits of Lorna Luft and yarn paintings for Filpucci of Florence. *Above:* In a corner of the main room at 860 Broadway, an Art Deco needlepoint chair by Maurice Dufrène.

ed into cubicles so that the burgeoning Warhol empire could be administered with a modicum of propriety and efficiency. As Andy foresaw, the cubicles were used for everything but business.

Toward the end of 1967, the landlord of the 47th Street building announced that it was due for demolition. A new Factory with more space had to be found, but what form should it take? According to Andy, "the biggest fights at the Factory were *always* over decorating." Hence row after row when the ideal space, the sixth floor of 33 Union Square West, materialized. Morrissey wanted a movie mogul's office with projection rooms, filing cabinets, and stacks of *Variety*. Andy, on the other hand, envisaged an all-purpose loft ("I wanted to do *everything*"), where, besides making movies, he could paint, photograph, experiment with video, sponsor a pop group, hold court—you name it. In the end a young Texan called Fred Hughes, whom Andy had recently put in charge of the Factory, transformed the new premises into a functional combination of studios and offices. "The Silver Period," Andy later wrote, "was definitely over, we were into white now . . . it wasn't all just hanging around anymore."

Thirty-three Union Square West was a landmark to the extent that it is mentioned in Scott Fitzgerald's story "May Day"; its eighth floor had been the headquarters of the U.S. Communist party for many years, while its top floor provided Saul Steinberg with a studio. As soon as Andy moved in, his lifestyle and circle of friends changed drastically, so did his work. Rowdy Rod La Rod was replaced as Factory favorite by wholesome Jed Johnson. Likewise the speed freaks and the transvestites, such as Jackie Curtis and Candy Darling, gave way to High Bohemia: collectors and dealers and people in "showbiz" or café society who were lured to the Factory by sociable Fred Hughes. But the most significant development was Andy's rejection of the flat, mechanical *facture* of Pop art for de Kooning–like painterliness, as witness the hundreds of portraits of Chairman Mao in which Andy deftly defused—censorious critics said trivialized—one of the most revered and reviled images in twentieth-century history. No question about it, there was more to Andy than silkscreens of electric chairs and Brillo boxes: the artist had an unsuspected feeling for rich impasto and shrill atonal color. Skeptics who had announced that Andy was a mere flash in the Pop pan were obliged to look and reconsider.

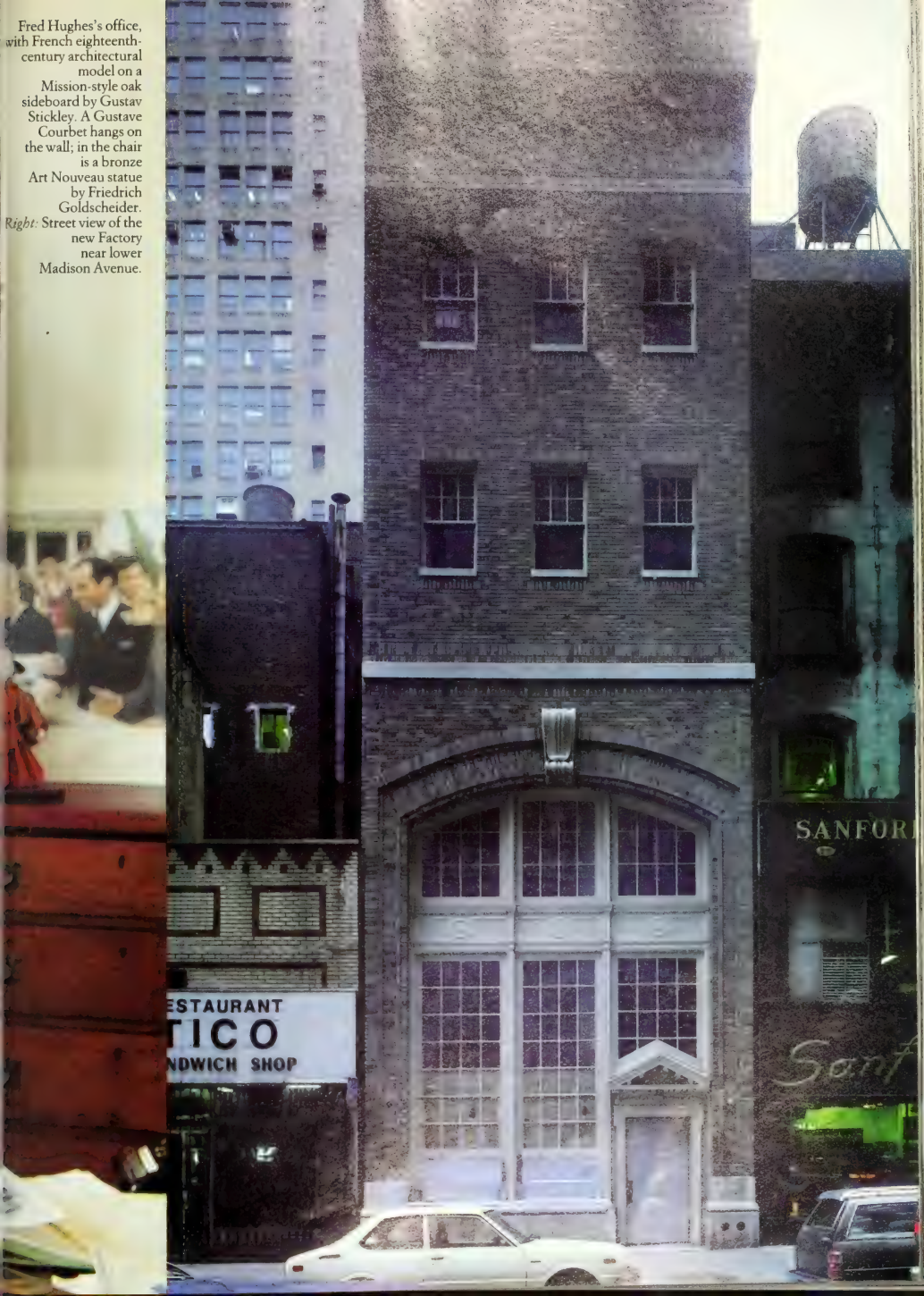
In their plush new quarters the Warhol enterprises *(Continued page 148)*

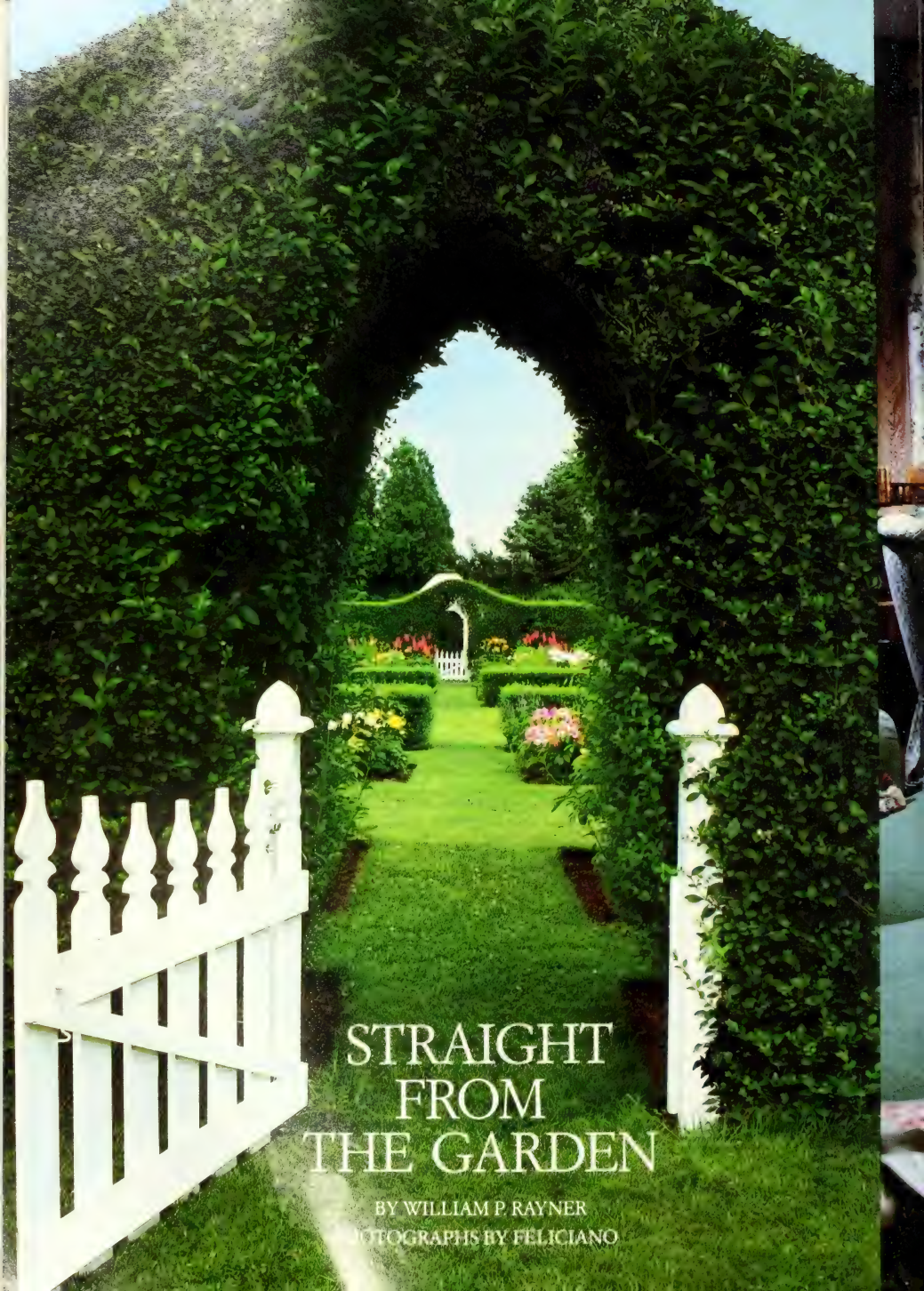






Fred Hughes's office, with French eighteenth-century architectural model on a Mission-style oak sideboard by Gustav Stickley. A Gustave Courbet hangs on the wall; in the chair is a bronze Art Nouveau statue by Friedrich Goldscheider.
Right: Street view of the new Factory near lower Madison Avenue.





STRAIGHT FROM THE GARDEN

BY WILLIAM P. RAYNER

OTOGRAPHS BY FELICIANO



In the living room, chairs and settees in nineteenth-century shapes are upholstered in soft English chintzes. Opposite: The rose garden lies at the end of a vista through arches in the privet.



An American version of an English room, the library has English Regency chairs, a black tole tray on a bamboo stand, and a gros-point rug in front of the fireplace.

Each spring, when the daffodils pop through our lawn, I think of Senga Mortimer. Even if I wanted to forget her, which I don't, the daffodils would remind me of her. This spring conjuncture began some years ago when my wife and I rented an eleventh-century tower in Tuscany, where Senga and her husband John Jay visited us. It was upon returning from Italy to our house in Southampton that I saw a stranger tearing up our lawn with what appeared to be an air-pressure jackhammer. When I demanded to know what he was doing, the stranger responded that it was a gift from Mr. and Mrs. Mortimer. Some gift, thought I . . . for while I recognized that Tuscan electricity suffered from occasional paralysis, Tuscan hot water was generally on holiday (in keeping with the rest of Italy in August), and Tuscan beds can be lumpy, I saw no reason to retaliate by having potholes dug in my hard-won lawn. "No," said the stranger, "I am not here to destroy your grass, but rather to plant the three thousand daffodils that the Mortimers have given you as a houseguest present and which you will see each spring." And each spring I certainly do see them, and it is then I think of Senga. It is a reoccurring gift, and one that grows better with each passing year.

This is the sort of gift that would occur only to Senga, for as she says, "I think of everything in terms of the garden." Almost every object in the Mortimer house reflects her love of flowers. The small enamel boxes arranged on side tables are awash with floral designs, as are the ashtrays, the lamps, her china, the tablecloths and napkins, all of which bear some signature of nature.

In her living room the large bay window is draped with curtains of a flower design, there are scores of watercolors of flowers stacked upon the pickled boiserie, which she has collected over the years, and every flower upon those walls "is one that I grow in my garden." The watercolor hanging above the sofa echoes those roses in the corner of her garden where she has had built a latticework arbor, about which Dawn Pink and Dawn White climbers grow in basket-weave designs. Surrounding the arbor are four beds of old-fashioned tea roses each containing four rows with six bushes. The rows run with military precision from white to dark pink (John F. Kennedy all white, Kordes Perfecta white edged in pink, Double Delight white trimmed with red, and Queen Elizabeth all pink). They are protected by eight-foot hedgerows through which the visitor enters under arches formed by the privets. Back in the living room, overstuffed chairs that are covered in hollyhock print are placed on each side of the fireplace, around which pictures of tulips, delphiniums, and narcissus imitate those growing in her meticulously ordered perennial garden. "I have eight L-shaped perennial plots, each of which is a reflection of its neighbor. Iris and peonies in the corners surround hollyhocks, foxglove, lilies, and lupines in the center. What of course saves them from appearing programmed is the blowsy spontaneity of the plants themselves. I have always admired English



The dining table is English Regency, as are the tufted leather chairs.
The blue-and-white table setting includes cobalt-blue glasses and Chinese export porcelains.

gardens with their studied informality."

Senga is an admirer of another English quality—that of patience. "You know," she says, "it has become apparent to me that English and Americans have different priorities when decorating. When we bought this house I was interested in immediately working on the garden but taking my time about the decorating. My American friends always wanted to know why I was not getting on with the job of finishing this room or that—'Why haven't you gotten rid of the brown rug in the living room, the green one in the library?' and so forth. We Americans are all performance-oriented. Take that sconce," she points to a bracket on the stair landing. "That should have had a vase on it two years ago, but I have not found the right one for it. On the other hand, my English friends come in and say it is comforting that people still give their individuality time to mature. I think the English take a rather longer view about decorating than we do, but there's something to be learned from both approaches." In truth, she adopts both approaches to suit her own needs in that she combines an American "do it yourself" with an English "don't do it too fast."

"Come and see my library," she says. I do; it's a shambles. I can see the desk in the middle of the room. . . . I can see the chairs that are pushed to the wall. . . . I can see the pictures that will some day be placed by the mantel. . . . I can see the sofa covered in chintz of a rhododendron pattern (called rhododendron stripe), and suddenly . . . I can see her vision. Looking out the window, I see banking the driveway two of the largest rhododendron trees I've seen outside of Bhutan. They are coming into blossom, and so will the library. As in her other rooms she starts with the garden and works it into the house.

One of the rooms that was first tackled, but is still a "work in progress," is the sun porch. The problem here was that Senga never could come to grips with whether this room should be the private domain of her orchids and ferns or whether she should allow them to mingle with her guests. She solved this by giving the orchids a private little hothouse of their own but still allowing them weekend privileges on the sun porch.

Senga keeps a diary and Polaroids her garden periodically to learn how it changes or progresses from year to year—which plants do well and which do not live up to their promise. "You see that field of daffodils over there on the left? How sad they look. Well, I checked my diary and found out that they were purposely left unsprayed last spring to see if it would make a difference. Well, it did. It used to be that I would never remove plants when they began to fail, but I have learned that I must be slightly ruthless about that or the garden will never make it. Keeping an accurate record helps." Hard work also helps. "When I am working in the garden I never want to stop—I always wish there was another hour of daylight and that I didn't have to go in and change for dinner." In this, if perhaps more zealous than the rest of





Opposite: All through the house, birds, flowers, and animals are in paintings and on needlepoint pillows—here in the library. *This page:* One of the luxuriant perennial borders.



Opposite: The front hall is treated like a small sitting room with a nineteenth-century English rug and fruit and flower prints. Beyond is the sun porch. *Above:* Four beds of tea roses ring a white lattice tea house that will be covered with roses eventually.

her family, she seldom labors alone. A passerby not long ago noted that John Jay was by the pool pruning the apple trees, Peter Davis (her teen-age son) was trimming the privet, Topper (age 7) was watering the roses, and Minnie (age 2½) appeared to be looking for worms with whom to play, having escaped from Nanny Goddard, who was busy weeding about the delphiniums. The only backsliders were Dashel and Toto, the Norfolk terriers, who were plumb tuckered out from unsuccessful rabbit-chasing earlier in the morning.

Senga Mortimer is a learner, a student, and she appears to love learning in order to share it. "I have *V. Sackville-West's Garden Book* here that you must take, I have *Marie Angel's Cottage Flowers*—I'll get it for you—do you know about Alvilde Lees-Milne and Rosemary Verey's *The Englishwoman's Garden, David Hicks's Garden Design,* Peter Coats's *A-Z of Plants,* or the wonderful newsmagazine *Gardens for All?* They are essential for you to read; let me make a note." But in the final analysis she, as all gardeners do, recognizes that we are trained by flowers themselves. Whatever we give to them they give back twofold. Cut one rose and two return. But it didn't hurt that she spent two years taking courses at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. It didn't hurt the Botanic Garden either, as now she gives back to them twofold with her support. It is another reoccurring gift. □

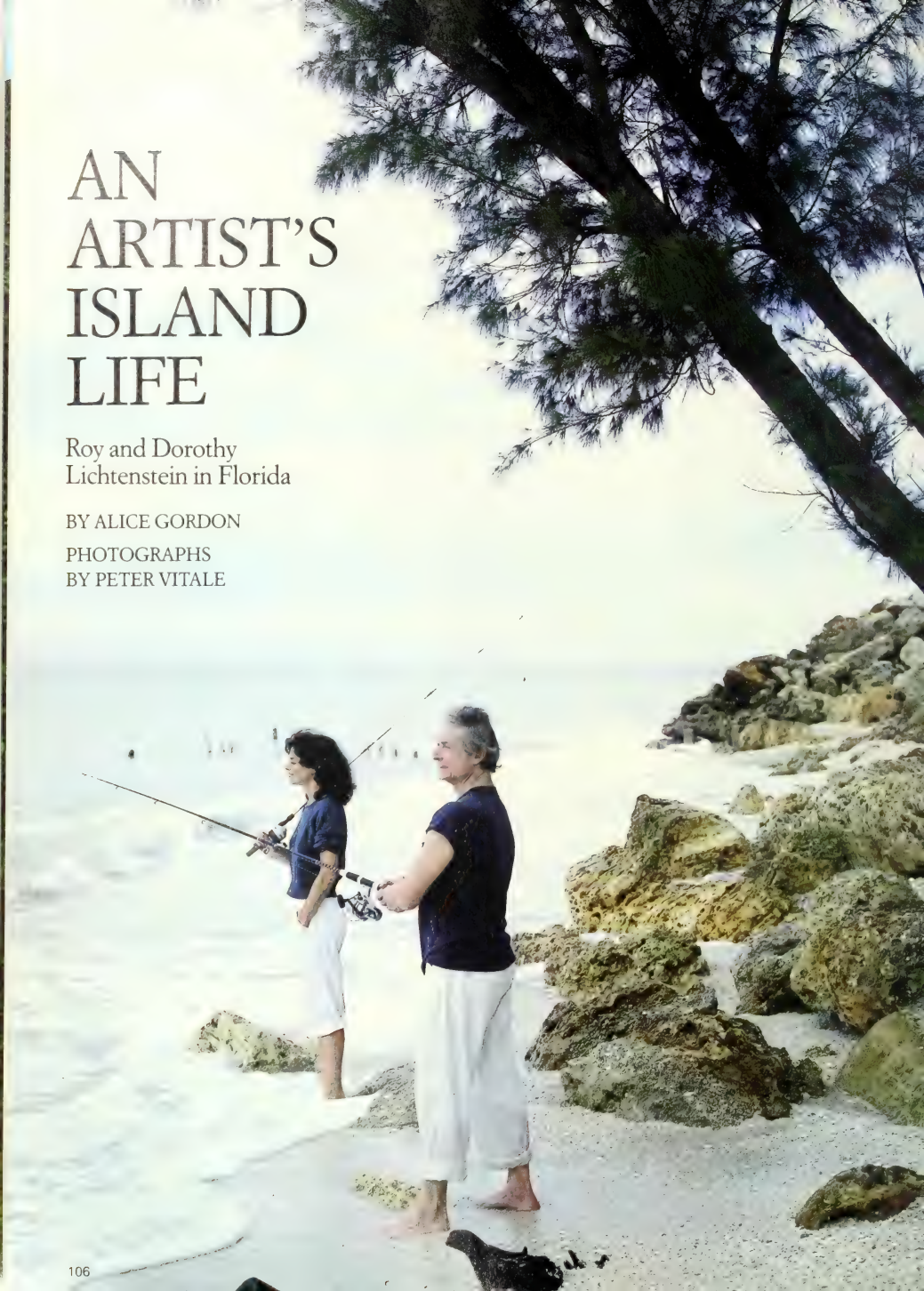


AN ARTIST'S ISLAND LIFE

Roy and Dorothy Lichtenstein in Florida

BY ALICE GORDON

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER VITALE





Opposite: When the Lichtensteins fish on the beach by their house, they "usually see more fish than fish," says Dorothy. *This page:* Roy and part of his *Still Life With Envelope*



Opposite: The treehouse-like southwestern corner of a wraparound veranda. *Above:* An old English farm table is surrounded by American Sheraton chairs. The Lichtensteins alternate between dining here and on the screened-in porch (seen on overleaf).

Until 1964, the narrow barrier island off Florida where Roy and Dorothy Lichtenstein get away from it all could be reached only by ferrying to an adjacent island, then crossing over a rickety little bridge. Dorothy and her renowned artist husband first saw the island two years ago. She realized then that Florida had pockets of pure American jungle. This discovery led her to an investigation of the state's even wilder areas, particularly the Everglades. As a place to vacation regularly, however, the Everglades hardly rivaled the safety the island offered along with its exotic vegetation and peaceful separation from the rest of the world. It took the couple one week to find their house on the island. Now, when they sojourn there, they live among Australian pines, buttonwood and palm trees, pelicans, egrets, spectacular storms and sunsets, and engage in a most fulfilling kind of do-nothingness.





The living/dining room holds much of the 1920s wicker furniture Dorothy has accumulated through buying, selling, and living with antiques. (She works from Little Barn Antiques in Sag Harbor, Long Island.) The blue-and-white-plaid fabric reminded her of early American homespun. Rugs on Mexican terra-cotta tile floor are Beloudj kilims. The dartboard gets attacked regularly.

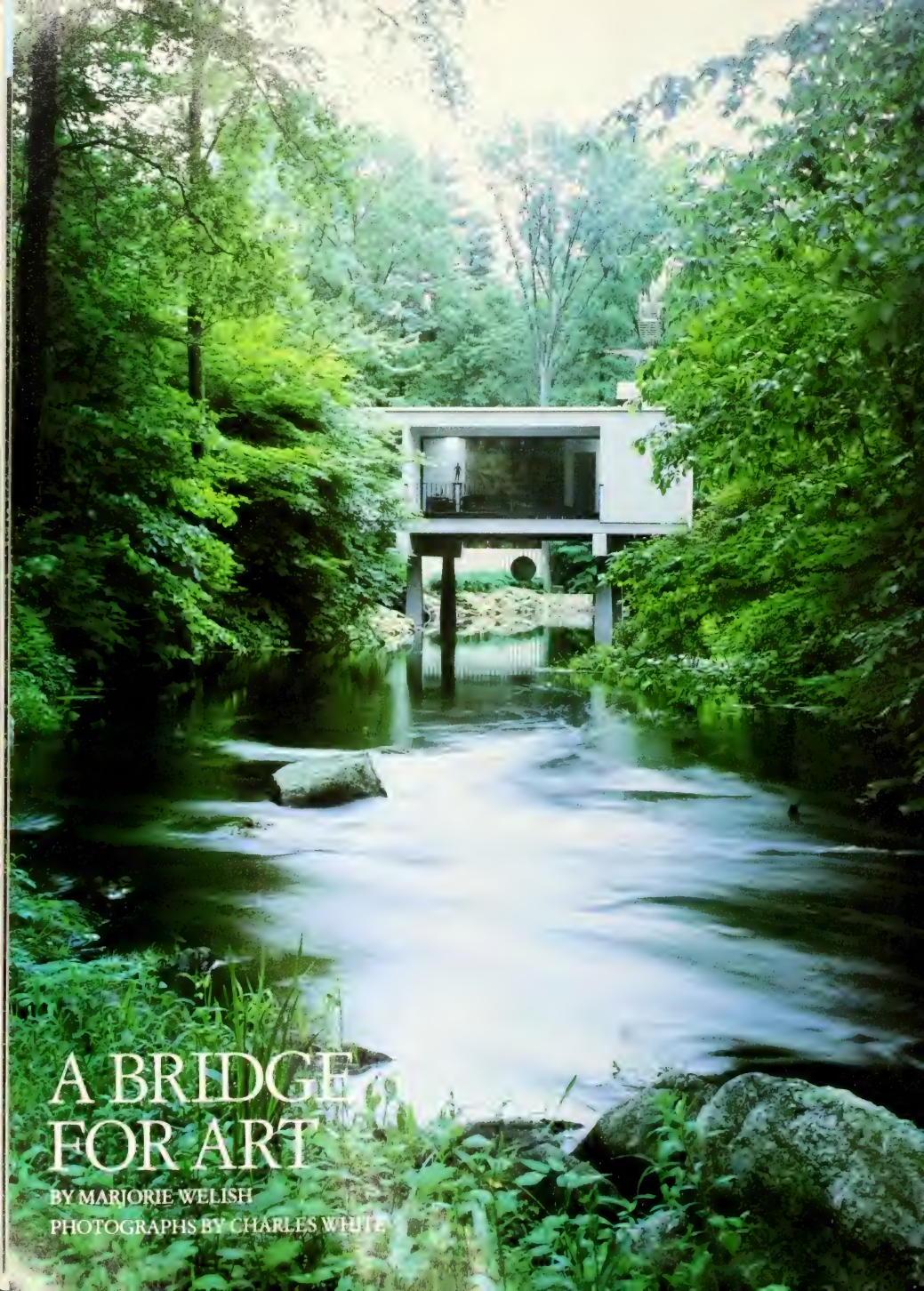




Right: In the master bedroom, a Hockney lithograph hangs over the bed, a Lichtenstein silkscreen above the desk. Quilt from Judi Boisson, New York. *Above:* An oversized painted jelly cupboard from Maine in a corner of the living room. Left of Lichtenstein woodprint is an Ellsworth Kelly.

"If you live in Florida all your life, you're more interested in escaping the sun than letting it in," says Dorothy to explain why skylights needed to be added to the house, which was built by a native islander. "We also made one wall all sliding-glass doors onto the screened-in porch, but other than that we didn't do much renovation. For decoration, I wanted all the beach-house clichés—simplicity, light, airiness, a summery feeling." These she achieved with smooth terra-cotta floors and white wicker; she left the cedar walls natural, even though she has a "Bauhaus tendency to paint everything white." When friends show up, the couple entertains casually. But mostly they relish keeping to themselves. Roy sketches and plans. Dorothy takes long walks on the beach, paddles a canoe through a nearby wildlife refuge, plants flowers and palm trees, reads a lot. She is now a birdwatcher and friendly foe of the pelicans who try to snatch the fish she and Roy catch. All this is what Dorothy calls "trying not to do much," which, understandably, is done with much pleasure. □





A BRIDGE FOR ART

BY MARJORIE WELISH

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHARLES WHITE



Opposite: The Sterns' living room looks out on the gentle Mimms River. *This page*: In the small den, by the Mies van der Rohe chair, a Ron Davis hangs "like a fresco," says Betty Lee Stern.



Betty Lee Stern opens up an International-Style house to Connecticut sun and California art

Until she moved to California thirteen years ago, Betty Lee Stern hadn't realized she was a cautious kind of art consultant. There with her husband, psychoanalyst Aaron Stern, she was amazed to find how playful artists are with light, space, and synthetic materials, how at ease with the notion of environmental living.

"It was with Jack Brogen, the fabricator for Bob Irwin and other artists, that I learned to be freer. Together we designed interiors expressly for art, spraying walls with reflective polyester resin to fill rooms with light. No one did that back then." Working with Brogen led to meeting art dealer Nicholas Wilder and soaking up Californian sensibility. The art she collected during those years reflects a deep and adventurous commitment to the vanguard of minimalism and clear form.

When she moved back East in 1977, Betty Lee Stern again showed daring in her desire to create a starkly elegant Bauhaus setting in which attention is always drawn to the periphery of the room to settle on the art. "Can you imagine trying to find very high ceilings in traditional Connecticut?" she asks. The Sterns finally found a modern house delicately straddling a narrow river. Its sliding windows opened onto nature, but the house desperately needed to be opened up to art. So Betty Lee Stern had the house gutted, added and subtracted rooms, and pierced the roof with fourteen skylights. Now bars of natural light define the architectural space while providing illumination for the art.

"It was all premeditated. I designed the changes for the house—and I contracted it myself, working with only an apprentice. We created a space for art, but also for living. I want my home to bring people and art together in the same light-filled space." □

Bright modernist colors and classic shapes of Kenneth Price's ceramics convey a spiritual feeling when reflected in the smoky glass table designed by Andre for Knoll.

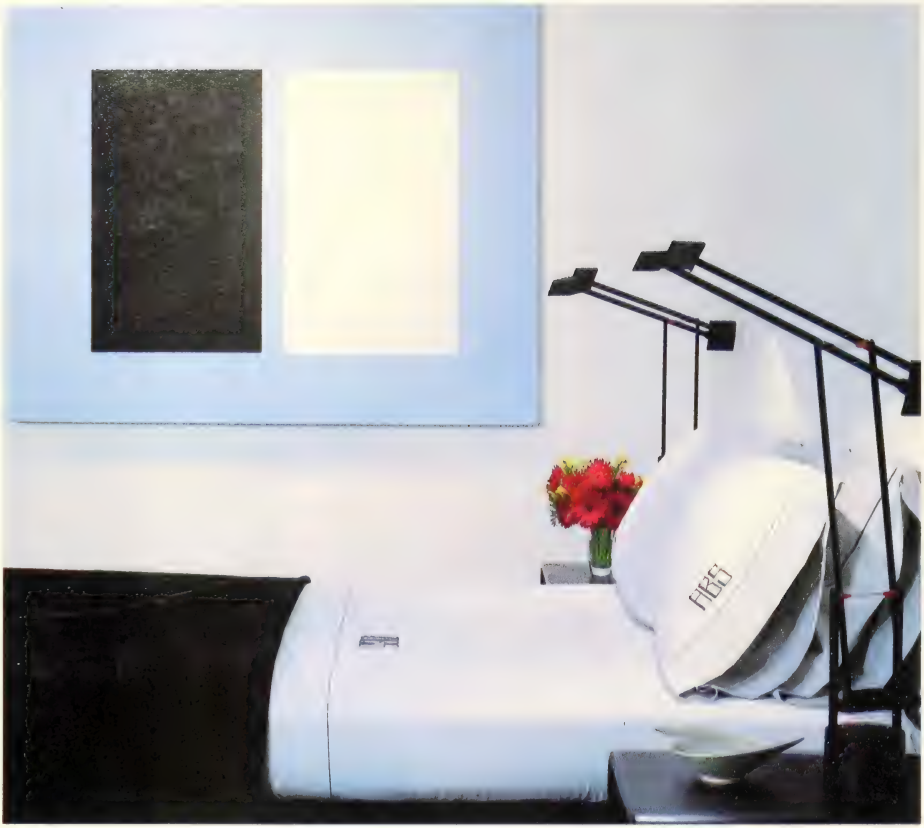






Opposite: A detail from the gallery entrance shows a painting on metal by Tom Holland and a Mackintosh chair from Atelier International. *Above:* Almost as wide as some art galleries, the entrance features paintings by Joe Goode (foreground) and John Altoon, a plastic prism by Robert Irwin, and a bronze torso by Robert Graham. A hieratic canvas by John McLaughlin stares back from the living room, where a ceramic tea tray with actual ceramic cups, *right,* by Mineo Misumo is displayed on a coffee table.







Opposite: In the dining room is a monolithic geometric composition by Ron Davis, its illusion pulling against the picture plane. *Above:* In the master bedroom, which, like the living room, overlooks Connecticut's Mianus River, a pair of cantilevering Tizio lamps balance a painting by John McLaughlin. *Left:* A ceramic pin wittily imitating a Mondrian canvas is Tony Berlant's contribution to Betty Lee Stern's collection.

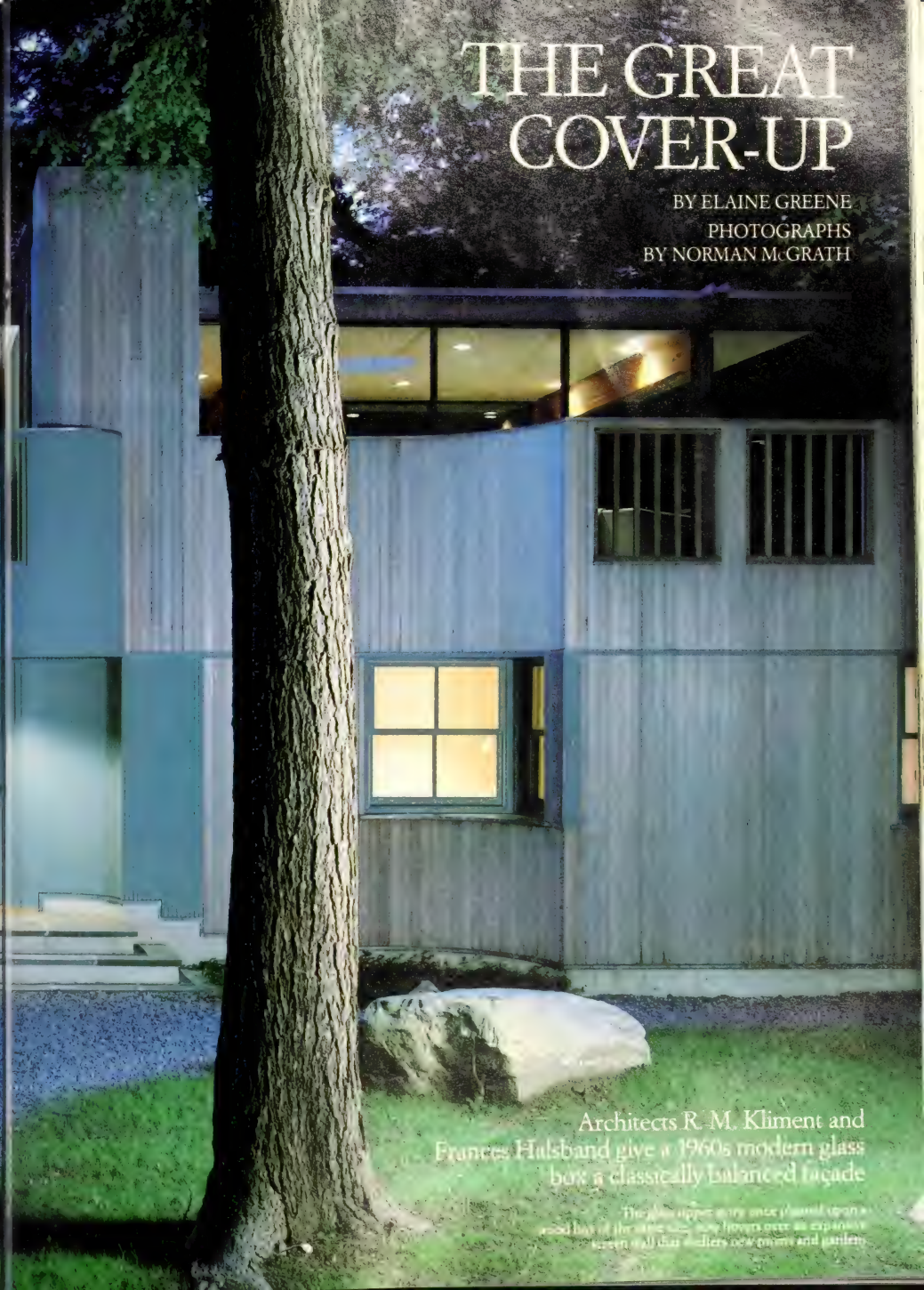




THE GREAT COVER-UP

BY ELAINE GREENE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NORMAN McGRATH



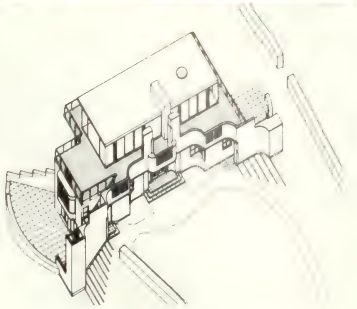
Architects R. M. Kliment and Frances Halsband give a 1960s modern glass box a classically balanced façade

The glass upper story once floated upon a wood box of the same size; now hovers over an expansive screen wall that outlines new rooms and gardens









A high glass pavilion overlooking the Hudson River was a wonderful idea, but the original owner was a bachelor, and the new owners were a couple with six children, two in residence and four who visit frequently. Although more space was the major item on the renovation program, additional square footage was not all the couple gained when architects R.M. Kliment and Frances Halsband finished their work. The once-boxlike house now has a completely altered presence as well, its high pavilion enclosed in a graceful new wrapping that sits far more harmoniously in its secluded woodland setting.

Kliment and Halsband, husband and wife as well as design partners, have run their own office since 1972 and have built a reputation for the civilized, considerate quality of their work, from the adroit organization of mass and space to refined detailing. Contemporary but not modish, they are people who ponder—on architectural history, for example. In a September 1981 *Architectural Record* article on Alvar Aalto and his predecessors, Robert Kliment wrote about the three idioms that form the architectural aesthetic at present: the functionalist-modern, the vernacular, and the Classical. Early in our century and in Aalto's early work, the design norm was Classical; Modern was the idiom of newness. Today these elements are reversed and the Classical tradition embodies ideas that are new, a trend often labeled Post Modernism.

Each of the three idioms plays a part in Kliment and Halsband's Hudson River house. Of the modern building they began with, they saved the most successful part, the glass-walled second story. Here on the enlarged and now-surrounding deck the resident family, year-round weekenders, lives "totally out of doors from May on." Even when indoors, they are intimate with nature through the glass, savoring the hemlock forest around them, the glorious broad river shining through the trees, the birds that they attract with six feeders, the visiting deer and racoons, the 21 wild turkeys they counted on the lawn last Washington's Birthday.

This unmistakably *designed* structure is hardly a vernacular house, yet one can recognize in the wood siding and in such details as the two-over-two windows echoes of modest older houses standing nearby in Putnam County.

Classicism is strongest in the important new façade's balance and serenity, and in its thoughtful relation to the flat part of the hilly site, which it embraces. Each time they see it, the owners say, the new approach to the house "reaches out and draws us inside." □

Opposite: New deck adjoins original kitchen. *Left, from top:* Children's wing, added to the left of original pavilion and hidden by new façade wall, consists of two side-by-side bedrooms over a playroom on grade. The glass-rimmed living room was untouched by the renovation. Jutting deck is also original, but was enlarged by new deck space over the children's wing and more behind the front wall. Axonometric drawing shows how existing pavilion remains the core of the new structure. Project architect, Jack Esterson; interior designer, Leslie Rogers. Living room's African sculpture from Cordier & Eckstrom Gallery; deck furniture, Woodard.

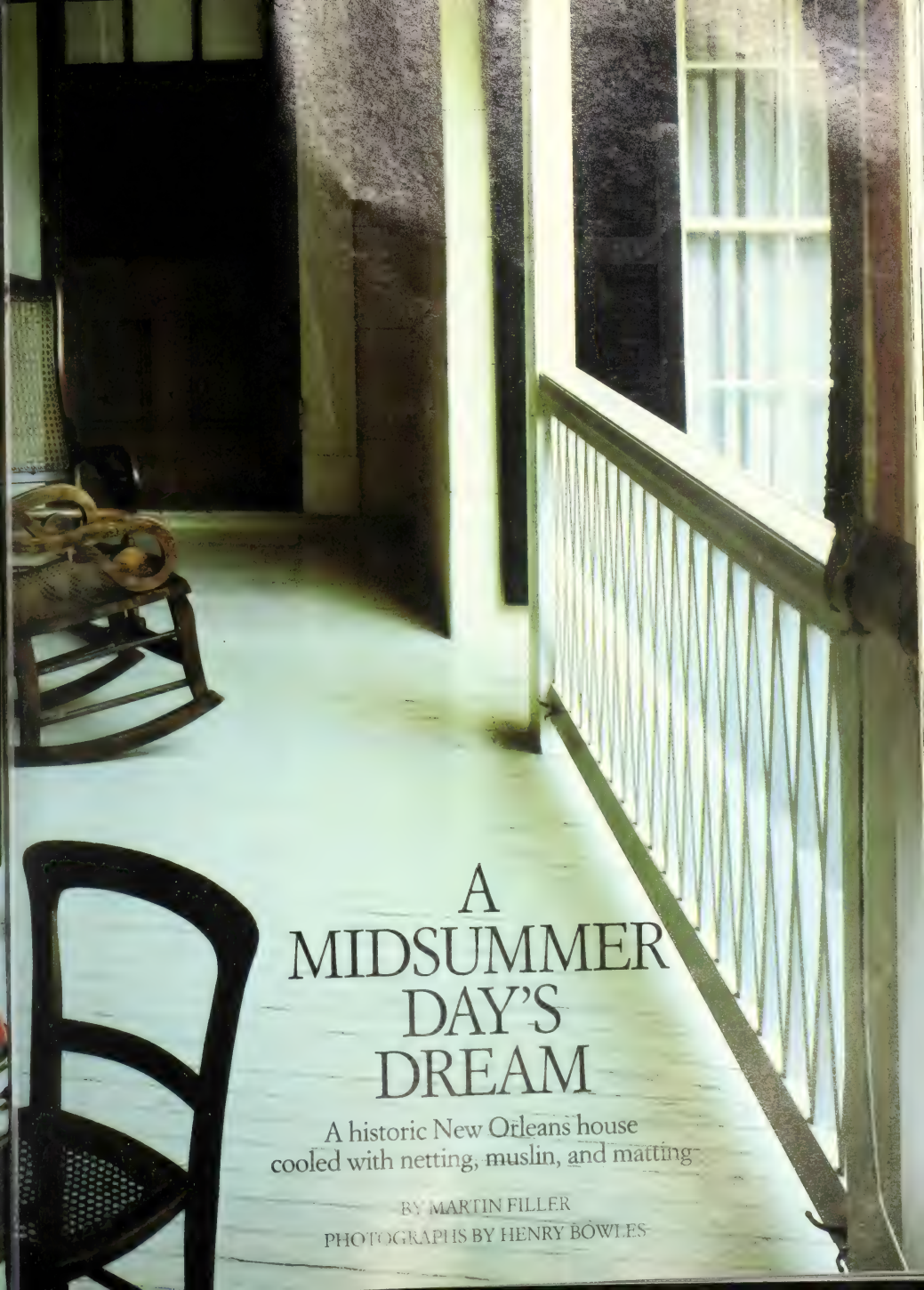
DRAWING © MARK MILLIGAN





This page: Looking down at rear of screen-wall façade. Top of river-viewing tower is reached by ladder. Wood siding and colors of its stain vary: four-inch boards for gray façade, one-inch strips for blue trim; six-inch boards in ivory around the living spaces. *Opposite:* Façade's center and right side seen from upper deck left. Doorway leads to grade-level terrace; window lights a new study.





A MIDSUMMER DAY'S DREAM

A historic New Orleans house cooled with netting, muslin, and matting

BY MARTIN FILLER

PHOTOGRAPHS BY HENRY BOWLES

The romantically veiled rooms of the Gallier House in summer dress summon up a somnambulistic vision of a leisurely, languorous way of life. They invite surrender to the inevitability of the season and its special rhythms, reminding us of forces of nature to which mankind must still bend its will

Summer in New Orleans is more than just another season, or a way of life, or even the proverbial state of mind. It is a physical fact as central and incessant as your heartbeat, inescapable proof that even in our post-industrial society there are still implacable forces of nature to which mankind must bend its will. The advent of the age of air conditioning has blurred the impact of summer in the South to some extent, and with it has passed much of the accumulated knowledge of generations of settlers who devised simple but ingenious strategies for dealing with the omnipresent heat.

One vivid reminder of the way things were is the historic Gallier House in New Orleans, one of the most imaginatively conceived museum houses in America. The paradox of the museum-house concept, of course, is that the very essence of a house—its living spirit—is almost always lost once it is no longer a home. Candlelight tours, sound-and-light shows, and costumed guides can't really compensate for the telling evidence of day-to-day habitation, which is virtually impossible to recreate. One reason the Gallier House has overcome that problem is that the dedicated group of people who have worked on the restoration project since 1969 do not consider their work finished, even though the house is fully and beautifully furnished. Their splendid decoration of the Gallier House at Christmastime with the distinctively New Orleans mixture of camellias and pine cones (see House & Garden, December 1980) is one example; another is the way in which the 1857 French Quarter mansion is dressed for summer.

The Victorians tended to equate simplicity with poverty, and the houses of people with any means tended toward elaborate decor. If the owner was a man of substance—as was James Gallier Jr., a successful architect—then materials were rich and finishes sumptuous. Therefore it is remarkable to see how a few relatively minor alterations can transform these formal rooms into spaces that seem infinitely cooler—both physically and psychologically—than they do in their winter incarnation, without any recourse to mechanical means.

Along with the heat, summer brought a visual respite from the *horror vacui* that typified the Victorian home. At the Gallier House, large expanses of refreshing white were introduced into the parlors and sitting rooms by shrouding chairs, sofas, and settees in simple unbleached muslin. The richly carved Rococo Revival furniture (the reigning fashion in 1853, when Gallier married his beautiful Creole wife, Aglae Villavaso) was thus partially obscured, and the uncharacteristically unadorned seating gives those rooms a prophetically modern appearance.

So do the simple rush mats that cover the floors, replacing the plush Brussels carpets that were taken up and rolled away for the summer with pungent tobacco leaves as an insect repellent. The neutral beige straw underfoot was further acknowledgement (though no doubt an unconscious one) that the busily patterned decorating schemes of the period were not conducive to visual (and thereby physical) repose; it was to be another half-century before aesthetic pioneers began to adopt plain, light-colored walls and floors as the basic backdrop for interior design.

But the element of summer decorating at the Gallier House that seems most evocative of nostalgic notions of the Old South is the extravagant use of mosquito netting. Much more so than

Preceding pages: The shaded rear balcony of the Gallier House, overlooking the garden courtyard, was a cool refuge from the formal dining room. *Opposite:* Mosquito netting was used throughout the house to protect precious gilded finishes from insects.







Like Phantom guests at a ghostly game of dominoes, marble-topped chairs surround a delicate game table in the parlor. A screen of square Corinthian columns separates this area from the more formal front parlor. Pairs of vases filled with romance flowers, urns, and paintings reflect the mid-Victorian love of symmetry.





Opposite: Although the heavily fringed and tasseled pelmets above the windows in the parlor were left in place, the matching damask curtains were taken down for summer. Trompe l'oeil wallpaper borders by Brunschwig & Fils are a reproduction of a period design. *Above:* The façade of the Gallier House, built between 1857 and 1860, boasts a filigree balcony typical of the Vieux Carré.





If summer was a time to be endured, then these surpassingly pleasant rooms show us that it was also a time to be enjoyed.

A corner of Aglae Villavaso Gallier's sitting room is arranged much as it would have appeared on a summer's afternoon, with her needlework on the frame at left and a lacquered table set for an intimate tea. The picture above the diminutively scaled secretary shows Moses presenting the Ten Commandments. On the floor below, a porcelain doll reclines in its carriage.

the muslin slipcovers or the straw matting, the mosquito netting was a matter of real physical necessity, the last line of defense against the disease-bearing insects that were a mortal threat along the Gulf Coast until the twentieth century. Yet like the house's summertime upholstery and floorcovering, this gauzy material, now often used for its purely decorative effect, offers a striking contrast to the unchanged parts of the bedrooms in which it is hung. The dominant characteristic of the Victorian interior was its solidity, indeed its impenetrability, and the transparent volume created by mosquito netting is as antithetical to the decorating of the day as a screened porch would be to a marble mausoleum.

Mosquito netting was used elsewhere in the house, too, covering mirrors, picture frames, chandeliers—in fact anything gilded—as protection against the corrosive droppings of flies, which could ruin the costly finishes of those glittering objects. At a time when pictures and mirrors were ritualistically shrouded in opaque hangings to signify periods of mourning, these see-through veils of netting must have struck an almost coquettish note. To our eyes, though, trained by contemporary art undreamed of by the Victorians, the incongruous wrappings of Christo come to mind.

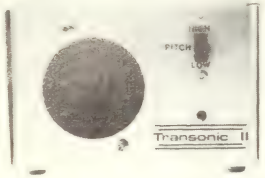
The total effect of the Gallier House in summer, then, is one of limpid, dreamlike calm. If summer was a time to be endured, then these rooms show us that it was also a time to be enjoyed. Even now, when life without refrigerated air seems inconceivable, the appeal of this way of life remains potent. It summons up a somnambulistic vision of long midday siestas, of handheld vetiver fans, of tingling, astringent splashes of Florida Water on the wrists and temples, and of surrender to the rhythm of the day as the sun climbed to its scorching zenith. By night, it might be cooler. □



The moiré silk curtains and hangings in the master bedroom were copied from designs published in the catalogue of the Great Exhibition held at the Crystal Palace in London in 1851. Heavily scented flowers, such as the gardenias and stephanotis on the table at left, were used as natural room fresheners to mask unpleasant summer odors.



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(Continued from page 88) irresistible in charm and grace: their long canes are far more pliable (you can bend them in a circle if you get carried away with curves) than any other type of rose. They have clusters of small flowers, sometimes no larger than aspirin pills, in great masses, while the large-flowered climbers have fewer flowers, but are of greater size.

Almost everybody knows 'American Pillar' in her strident carmine pink with a white center. It is a single rose, coming in great clusters, and while often and wrongly despised as common, it is now becoming somewhat rare, and this fact may give it a little respect for a change.

Equally famous is the old rambler (it came out in 1877) 'Dorothy Perkins', which is smothered with clusters of soft, pink, small double roses. Like the others of the rambler group, it was enormously popular at the turn of the century; it is impossible to think of a late Victorian or Edwardian garden without these clustered beauties. 'Dorothy' is the result of crossing the wild Rosa Wichuraiana with the beautiful old hybrid perpetual variety, 'Mme. Gabriel Luizet', and when seen at its best, it is an impressive rose. Unfortunately, it is a martyr to mildew and is now rarely grown in mainland gardens.

In such places as Nantucket, mildew is by no means the inevitable curse of mildew-prone ramblers that it is on the mainland. One reason ramblers have become a feature of the Cape and the islands is simply that the roses perform better there and remain in better health.

The whole group of ramblers may be thought of as children of one wild climbing rose (usually either *Rosa Wichuraiana* or *Rosa multiflora,* or else a related form such as *Rosa setigera,* which has close affinities to the latter and one nineteenth-century garden rose. The wild parent is always single, with five petals, and typically resembles a blackberry in bloom. *Rosa multiflora,* indeed, is sometimes used as a dense enormous hedge around farm fields (where its plentiful seedlings are a nuisance, but it affords splendid shelter for wildlife, and its red haws afford winter food for many birds).

Most of the ramblers and long pliant canes with graceful clusters of bloom in great showers were bred in America and France around 1900, but 'Thelma', a nearly thornless, fragrant, soft pink cluster, only came out in 1927, a fairly enchanting child of the far less graceful 'Paul's Scarlet Climber', which quite lacks the pliant grace of the ramblers. Another old rambler, of quite different parentage, which should be grown wherever the climate permits, is 'Félicité et Perpétue'. This lovely white, which came out in 1827, has a soft scent and fine, neat glossy leaves. It is still grown by discerning gardeners not only for sentiment but for beauty.

Sometimes you run into the old "blue rose," called 'Veilchenblau', a German rambler of 1909. It opens violet from reddish-purple buds, and when open the petals have a pale near-white stripe; and then the color fades. People in rose societies, who sometimes show little generosity or tolerance toward roses not for the show bench, almost uniformly hate it. But it depends. Against a gray background, mixed with a soft yellow rambler such as 'Goldfinch' or, more daring, a pink rose, it can be effective. Far handsomer is its child, 'Violette', which is almost thornless and a pronounced purple that does not look so anemic, nor fade so sadly, as the parent.

Indeed, if a suggestion could be made to improve the charm of the island roses, it might be to encourage planting of more 'Violette' and 'Goldfinch', although neither is listed by the average commercial rose nursery, nor is it found at usual sources. All this means is that some energetic gardener should locate plants and propagate them (ramblers grow easily from cuttings), or else search "old rose" companies and "old rose" garden societies for plants, or, failing that, import these roses from abroad. Many of them are available in England and some in Canada.

The trouble with all the old ramblers is that they bloom only three weeks of the year and then shut up shop for the next 49. They would probably not be grown at all, except for one fact: no other group of roses can rival them for their pliant graceful habit, and since all their strength goes into the one flowering, they make a spectacular show. Besides, if you grow a number of kinds, the season extends over six weeks or more.

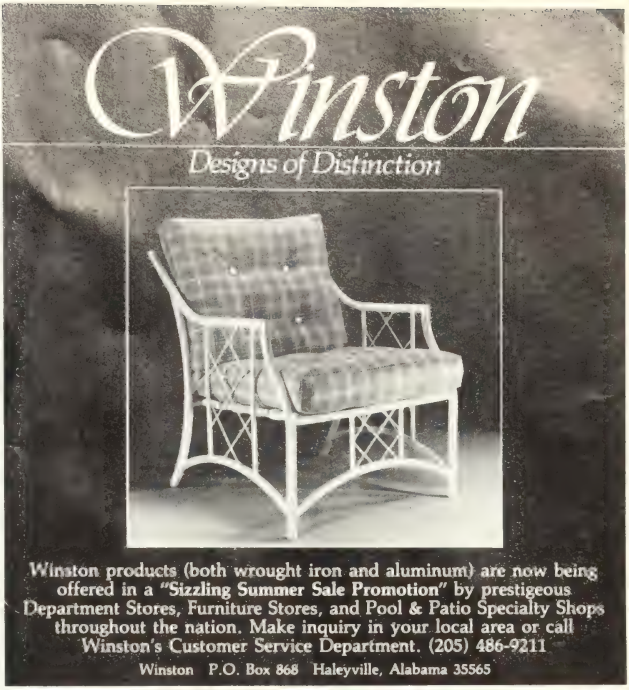
But they are gradually being ousted by the large-flowered climbers, especially the ones that bloom off and on through the growing season, such as the splendid yellow 'Golden Showers', or the rose-red 'Parade', or the full red 'Don Juan'. Admirable as these are, and they really are superb additions to the gardening world, they have none of what might be called the innocent schoolgirl grace of the older ramblers. On the other hand, the flowers are larger, the scent sometimes better, the resistance to mildew vastly better, and of course the greatly prolonged blooming season is a plus. There is room for both, surely. It would be a crime to replace all the old ramblers with flashy new, large-flowered varieties.

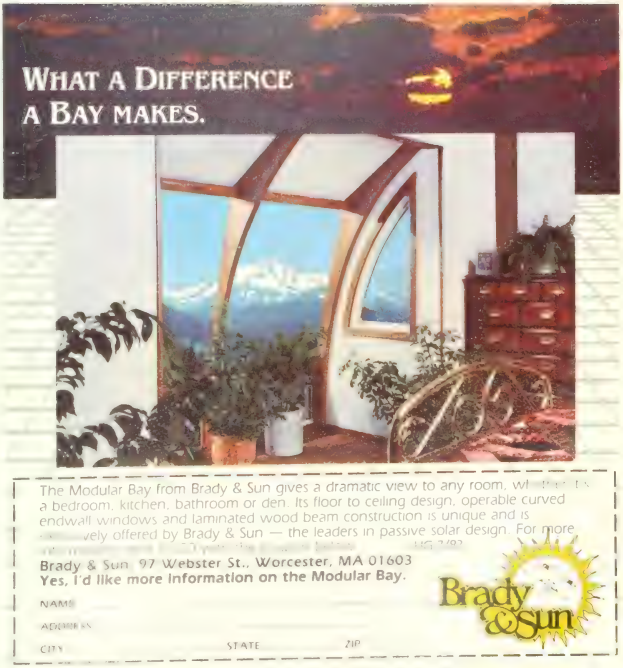
Southerners are always astonished to find that the tougher tea roses survive not only on Long Island but even on Cape Cod and the islands, though admittedly these are not roses you just plop in and forget. 'Climbing Lady Hillingdon' is a fine sort with nodding yellow flowers that might yet be found in maritime gardens far north.

Climbing hybrid teas are much tougher. They need relatively little pruning; on the other hand, they are relatively tender, though hardier than the climbing teas, which with few exceptions should stay south of Norfolk. They are not repeat-blooming, beyond an occasional stray flower, but sorts such as 'Climbing Peace' are among the most spectacular and enormous of all roses.

There are a few roses, such as the soft pink climber 'New Dawn', which combine a surprising assortment of virtues and which are rightly seen not only in Nantucket but over much of the temperate gardening world. This one has something of the pliable grace of the old ramblers, something of the splendor of the hybrid tea bloom, plus a good perfume, excellent shiny foliage, and a willingness to repeat its bloom freely, even after the main early-summer flush. Not surprisingly, with so formidable an array of virtues, it is widely grown and therefore despised by gardeners who cannot abide plants that everybody can (and does) grow. 'New Dawn' is, for all that, one of the very greatest roses of all time.

But any rose looks good when its setting is right—the real secret of Nantucket roses. □







The Beaux-Arts Ball in New York, 1931, with architects modeling their own buildings

AT THE CENTER OF THEIR OWN UNIVERSE

The perennial tug of war between the architect's ego and his client's needs

By Spiro Kostof

THE IMAGE OF THE ARCHITECT
by Andrew Saint
Yale University Press, 180 pages, $19.95

Architecture is at a point of crisis, a make-or-break crossroads, and the culprit seems to be "the prima-donna art-architect." Or at least this is the theory being put forth by British architectural historian Andrew Saint in his new book. This is the kind of argument heard twenty years ago, and it was carried on into the next decade with such books as John Burchard's *Bernini Is Dead?* and Herbert M. Muschamp's *File Under Architecture.* At that time high design was deprecated in architecture schools, pretty drawings and models were suspect, between client and architect came somebody called the User you were supposed to care about, and there was earnest if inconclusive talk of "participatory design."

I should have thought we had outgrown all that anxious questioning—for better or for worse. It has by now become clear that architecture does indeed have a future. The User has been pushed back into the shadows. High design is back with a vengeance; but then it had never left, not really, and probably never will as long as there are people and institutions that need it for *their* image and are willing to pay for it. And high design has nothing much to do with good architecture, which can be both high and low, just like bad architecture.

Which is why I am impatient with the argument of Mr. Saint's book, and wish it were not there; because with that out of the way there remains a lot of engaging material. *The Image of the Architect* is in fact an extremely readable collection of essays loosely strung along—"partial, separate, and unsystematic," the author calls them—about the architectural profession mostly in Britain and the United States in the last two centuries so that it is a much more limited study than the title leads us to believe.

For the most part this is unhackneyed stuff. We meet the architect in works of literature. Here is Mr. Pecksniff in *Martin Chuzzlewit,* of whose "architectural doings, nothing was clearly known," says Dickens, "except that he had never designed or built anything"; James Spinlove in H. B. Creswell's *The Honeywood File* (1929); and, of course, Ayn Rand's Howard *(Continued on page 146)*

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(Continued from page 144) Roark in the *Fountainhead* (1943), who serves at the beginning of the book to introduce the author's chief animus, "The Architect as Hero and Genius." We are also given sympathetic appreciations of the business or planning partners in celebrated firms—Dankmar Adler, Daniel Burnham, William Mead of McKim, Mead, and White—who are neglected by the architectural historian busy lionizing their designing counterparts. Architectural entrepreneurs of our day get a fair hearing. British readers will be interested to know about John Portman or William Wayne Caudill of CRS Design Associates; American readers will learn about comparable figures across the Atlantic like John Poulson or Colonel Richard Seifert. A chapter on the Bauhaus treads rather familiar territory, but even here Mr. Saint succeeds in keeping us alert with his insistence that the legendary school was in serious trouble and would have gone under even if there had been no Depression and no Nazis, and there is a sentimental roundup of the *other* diaspora, the "brave men" like Ernst May, Hannes Meyer, Mart Stam, and Bruno Taut, who went the opposite way, to Russia, when the worst came.

But perhaps the finest piece is "Myth and the Medieval Architect." Here Mr. Saint reviews the shifting assessment of credit for the architectural prodigies of the Western Middle Ages. He starts with Goethe's rapturous encomium of "Master Erwin, Governor of the Fabric of the Minster of Strasbourg," traces the converse tendency to extol teamwork and the craft of the master mason in the writings of Ruskin, Morris, Edward Schroder Prior, and company and back again, via W.R. Lethaby and John Harvey, to the conception of the medieval architect as a full professional much like his modern counterpart.

The debate between collectivism and the cult of the individual creative figure presents the author with the chance, early on in the book, to show his true colors. "The organization of medieval building," he writes, "depended upon separate, skilled specialisms, of whose intricate collaboration the Gothic cathedrals are the consummate representation. . . . The pattern of our great industries today (including, increasingly, architecture and construction) is also that of shared specialisms." Why are we so preoccupied with the name architect, then, when the product is intricately collaborative, the process managerial? "We do not, after all, often ask ourselves who designed the Rolls-Royce, a jumbo jet, or even for that matter most great modern works of engineering."

Well, there you have it. But not quite. Mr. Saint is too ambivalent throughout to push this central idea vigorously by going, say, into the history of standardization in modern architecture and explaining why it failed to alter the deep-seated habit of seeing each building, even within the same type, as a complex and specific program that requires an individual response. Nor is he very much interested in methods of production or the organization of the labor force. He does concern himself with the organization of the architectural profession, and supplies histories of the Royal Institute of British Architects and the American Institute of Architects. He is critical of their championship of large practices rather than of striving individuals or salaried architects, and he finds professionalism to be often synonymous with protectionism.

But his overriding displeasure is with high-style superstars and "architectural pundits [who] still hang on the latest pronouncement or value the smallest sketch of the recognized darlings of the hour." Yes, they can be arrogant and tedious. But Mr. Saint shows no discrimination between plain hype or radical chic and the more profound impulses that quicken our architectural culture. In a single page he goes after both Philip Johnson and Louis Kahn, two of the most enriching architects of the century. He quotes the characteristically mischievous Johnson to the effect that Kahn was "a total phony, a worse phony than I am." Mr. Saint calls Kahn "a clever architect whose career falsified the realities of practice to his own advantage." And what are these realities? They have to do with purpose, Mr. Saint tells us, with materials, above all with *techne*, with "sound building." If Mr. Saint cannot see in Kahn's buildings the evidence of his lifelong devotion to materials and the craft of building, there is probably little point to speak of it.

But Mr. Saint has his mind set. He wants the "imaginative" component curbed. He will not allow architecture to think like the other arts. It does have an artistic side, this much he will grant, but it has taken over because art was "the only element in architecture to which some other professional group did not have prior or better claim." But it must be kept in its place; "art" for him is something of a frill that "when used wisely and maturely, helps to make buildings attractive." So he looks forward to an architecture in which "imagination and artistic ability are more evenly balanced with technical and managerial experience, in which collaboration with other specialists takes on a more realistic, less high-handed meaning, in which 'sound building' is valued above 'high art.' "

As I said, I wish there were no thesis to the book. Most of us who are troubled about the state of contemporary architecture would dearly pray that being too "artistic" was the gravest problem it faced. Mr. Saint writes as if architecture today should be a strictly definable species. He sounds innocent of the pluralism in architectural practice, the vast array of firms, small and large, and of individuals who are involved with specialized concerns of every description. The "paper architecture" he so resents is a tiny corner of our architectural culture. And why indeed should we be deprived of it when it can be beautiful at times and evocative and searching? Why should we not have our handful of hero-architects to idolize and feel good about, the way we do about our great painters and novelists? Why shouldn't we have both Proust and *People*?

No, Mr. Saint's moralizing seems to come from another era. *The Image of the Architect* can only have been written by an Englishman raised on Pugin, Ruskin, and Morris, who has never left the nineteenth century. □

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(Continued from page 94) prospered as never before until the summer of 1968, when a lady from the lunatic fringe of women's lib—Valerie Solanis by name—shot the artist almost to death in the course of promoting S.C.U.M., her Society for Cutting Up Men. Fortunately the artist made a miraculous, if slow, recovery and, within a year, the Factory at 33 Union Square West was back in production.

By 1973 Warhol and Co. had once again outgrown the Factory. Even larger premises had to be found to accommodate the editorial offices of Andy's new magazine, *Interview*. The perfect space materialized around the corner. Built in the 1870s as a furniture warehouse, 860 Broadway had been remodeled in the 1920s for the S & H Green Stamp company; and to Andy's delight, the vast second floor boasted an incongruously pompous boardroom to which I made a suitable contribution in the form of a gargantuan moose's head. Once again Fred Hughes had everything, except the paneled boardroom, painted white. But for all the similarities in décor, the ambience of 860 Broadway turned out to be different from that of Union Square West. Once again the changes in lifestyle can be attributed to Fred Hughes, who was determined to project a reasonably respectable image and to establish the Factory, socially as well as artistically, on the international map. To this end the Anglophile Hughes imported aristocratic English girls—successive daughters of Lord Lambton and sundry Guinnesses—to help out around the Factory and on *Interview*. He also embellished the place with some grand Germans, including a Hanseatic princess who confessed to being scandalized not so much by Andy's camp followers as by the discovery of the portrait of her ancestor, Queen Victoria, on the label of a Bombay gin bottle. Were these daisy-fresh debutantes all that different from Andy's Chelsea girls of yore? After watching one after another react to the stimulus of Factory life, I am afraid the answer has to be no.



View from Fred Hughes's office over the entranceway to the new Factory.

Another important new influence on the Factory was Bob Colacello, editor of *Interview*, whose job it was to chronicle the worlds of art, fashion, entertainment, and café society, also to



attract celebrities to the new premises. Thanks to Colacello and Hughes, Andy now presided day after day over what amounted to the only salon in Manhattan. Boardroom luncheons of excellent cold cuts were—indeed still are—a bizarre mishmash: artists from O'Keeffe to Schnabel, writers from Mailer to Burroughs, sacred monsters from Swanson to Divine rubbed shoulders with royal personages, various Kennedys, tennis champions, tycoons, journalists, and bevies of beautiful star-struck kids of every class and race, nationality and sex, out for the instant fame that, to believe Andy, is within everybody's reach.

And the work? To quote Robert Rosenblum, "The Beautiful People had replaced the dreams and nightmares of Middle America" as subjects. Andy's disingenuous snobbery was reflected in numerous society portraits that gave a new lease on life to the bravura tradition of Boldini and Sargent, a tradition that had fizzled out around World War II. True, many of the sitters were involved in the arts: collectors, dealers, curators, as well as the writer of this article. But by and large Andy concentrated on café society and the fashion world: people like Yves Saint Laurent, Halston, Diane Von Furstenberg, Hélène Rochas, who were in a position to pay a substantial sum for anything from one to twenty likenesses of themselves.



Fred Hughes's office with ceiling gear left from time when building was Con Edison generating station.

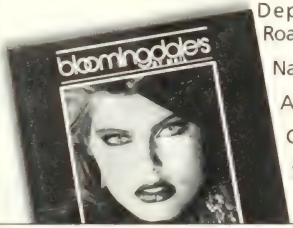
And since these portraits were trendy and eye-catching, flattering yet resembling (were they not based on photographs?), and since they generated considerable publicity for sitter and artist alike, they had a well-deserved success with narcissists desperate for an alternative to Portraits, Inc.; not, however, with some of Andy's former followers,who denounced the pope of Pop for selling out. This was to miss the point. These posterlike portraits are quintessentially Pop, for they provide the sitter with images that, besides being labels (like the famous soup cans), *(Continued on page 150)*



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Looking from the *Interview* conference room into Fred Hughes's office.

(Continued from page 149) are in Norman Mailer's words, advertisements for himself."

At the same time Andy took on a succession of more challenging themes: hammers and sickles, Puerto Rican transvestites, shadows and sexual parts; and more recently he has reverted to the subjects on which his early reputation was based—women's shoes and flowers—as well as endangered species and, that ultimate challenge, the cross. In each case the artist has demonstrated that the Warhol conjuring tricks still work and that his cool—no, cold-blooded—way of defiantly teetering on the brink of schlock has not lost its power to titillate or, better still, vex.

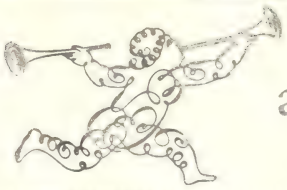
And now Andy has had to move once again. How, one wonders, will Factory IV—a rehabilitated Con Edison subway generator station located on East 33rd Street—differ from the old one, and its products—paintings, video programs, *Interview*'s interviews—from all that came before? My own guess is that Andy is due for a go at sculpture—the one field he has not as yet tackled—and that technology will play a greater part in his activities. And let us hope, albeit vainly, that he will get around to exploiting his incomparably rich archives. For, make no mistake, one of Andy's greatest claims to fame is that he is the principal recording angel of our time—always on the



In the conference room, louvers, operated by a wheel, open over glass brick.

job whether in the White House or a star's dressing room, dining with Beautiful People or the likes of you and me. Besides his portraits, tens of thousands of photographs depict virtually anyone he has ever met. And since his tape recorders are seldom turned off, he has accumulated an oral archive that includes enough material to provide close friends like Diana Vreeland or Paulette Goddard with ready-made autobiographies. Likewise his extensive diaries record his perceptions of a vast circle of acquaintances, and his magazine, *Interview*, publishes their on-the-whole vacuous chatter, and chronicles their no-less-vacuous activities. Only the F.B.I. has more comprehensive archives, but then Andy has a lot in common with J. Edgar Hoover. Despite the mask of ditsy innocence ("Gee! Gosh! Wow!"), the artist is no less addicted to power, no less ruthless, no less, in the last resort, reticent. How else could this silver wraith have survived? How else sustain twenty years of notoriety and stardom?

Correction: In the March issue, on page 134 of "A Garden of Sun and Water," the Vicomte Charles de Noailles was incorrectly identified, due to a printing error. He served as vice-president of the Royal Horticultural Society in Great Britain.



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Collage No. 4: Bookman, 1920–22

ANOTHER LOOK AT
THE OTHER STELLA

Joseph Stella *(1877–1946), Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C., May 12–July 17, 1983; Columbus Museum of Art, Ohio, [illegible]*

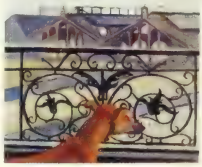
The centennial of the opening of the Brooklyn Bridge is an especially apt occasion to recall the career of an artist whose work is often identified with that splendid expanse. "Joseph Stella's masterpiece" is how his 1919 portrait of the bridge has been described, and this powerful icon of America's bedazzled faith in technological progress is often evoked as representative of its time, the structure that inspired it, and the man who painted it. This painting may well offer a valuable perspective on that era and on the Bridge, but as the Stella survey now on at the Smithsonian's Hirshhorn Museum reveals, the image the painting gives of the painter is foreshortened. To be remembered only by the major works of a lifetime's worth of creative activity is an irony fate seems to reserve for some of history's more gifted souls. Stella has suffered in particular from distortions of the present, for, as this show reveals, he and his art wandered far afield from the style and the place of his most celebrated image.

Born near Naples in 1877, Joseph Stella saw the "free, light-filled radiant space" of his native mountain village as the earliest inspiration for his art. When he was eighteen, he immigrated to New York to live with family. A year after his arrival in the United States, Stella began his painting studies first at the Art Students League and later at the New York School of Art. Naturally, the most available subject for the young artist was the life of his fellow immigrants on the Lower East Side, and it would have been logical for Stella to continue developing his "Ashcan" motifs. However, in 1909 Stella made the first of a lifetime of idiosyncratic gestures and returned to Italy to learn from the work of the Italian Masters. Two years later, he made his way to Paris and there became one of the American expatriates to learn the precepts of Modernism firsthand.

Stella rejected none of his early influences. In the years that produced the *Brooklyn Bridge* painting and his other well-known work, *Battle of Lights, Coney Island, Mardi Gras* (1913–14), the artist combined the subjects of his urban environment and the symmetry so dear to classical composition with the fractured forms of Cubism and Futuristic lines of force.

His work was in constant flux, and so it seems obvious that after some years of absorption with his urban surroundings, Stella should turn to nature. By the early 1920s, the artist was creating closeup images of flowers, based on drawings he made at the Bronx Botanical Gardens. The delicacy of works like *Landscape (Waterlily,* 1920–24) and *Lotus* (ca. 1929) appear to have come from a hand very different from the one that drew powerful cityscapes.

Stella was moving in many



Dog on Balcony, Paris, 1929



BARCELONA REMOUNTS MIES'S GEM

The most famous phantom of modern architecture is Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's temporary German Pavilion built for the International Exposition in Barcelona in 1929. Its timeless simplicity and faultless elegance have been kept alive in photos, *above*, but now the building will be reconstructed on its original site. The $1.5-million project is a noble attempt to resurrect a twentieth-century masterpiece, but its success will hinge on the perfection of its finishes, a *sine qua non* of the Miesian style. *Martin Filler*

directions at once, from Realism to symbolism to abstraction, through an array of media. It is typical of what critic Hilton Kramer has called his "untidy and contradictory career" that in the years he painted the lovely though stylistically conventional painting on glass, *Landscape,* he was also making *Collage #4: Bookman,* a Cubist-related composition that drew as well on his friend Marcel Duchamp's affection for the "found object."

It is a hodgepodge of a body of work, but somehow suited to the peripatetic life that Stella led. Stella was conscious of the contradictions and problems in the tortuous route he chose, but it suited a man who believed that "Art escapes any definition . . . innumerable are the roads leading to Art—but great is the joy of venturing through virgin soils." □

Mary Ann Tighe



REMEMBERING THE MASTER OF "THE HOUSE OF LIFE"

"Homage to Mario Praz" goes on—as this 1820 Biedermeier table, part of an appealing show so-named of about fifty watercolors of early-nineteenth-century furniture designs and interior views, attests. These are pictures after Praz's own heart: photographs by Tina Freeman of Neoclassical rooms in a Venetian palazzo, as well as amusing watercolors of, among others, a chiffonier and a bronze *brûle parfum.* It all takes place until June 30 at Façade, the new New York gallery for drawings and watercolors of architecture, garden design, and theater. Edith Sitwell inspired the gallery name with her 1923 London performance called *Façade.* Edith jolted them with her verse and Sir William Walton supplied the music.

Shelley Wanger

FABULOUS FABRICS OF THE DARK CONTINENT

African Textiles, *American Museum of Natural History, New York, through December 4*



Ayt Brahim women, Morocco

"Civilization" still has a lot to learn from "primitive" art: the weavings of Africans from Cairo to Cape Horn are the subject of a magnificent exhibition that no doubt will influence fabric design in this country in the years ahead.

'S WONDERWALL, 'S MARVELOUS



During the golden age of world's fairs, from 1889 to 1939, such unforgettable fantasies as the Eiffel Tower, the Ferris Wheel, and the Futurama dazzled the public. Fortunately for New Orleans, architects Charles Moore and William Turnbull (with Perez Associates/Studio Two Architects) have created a scheme that will be a highlight of the 1984 World's Fair there. It is the Wonderwall, *above,* a 2,300-foot-long amusement arcade. Moore and his merry company have uninhibitedly but skillfully mixed bits and pieces of the pleasurable past from the Brighton Pavilion to Luna Park, from the Palazzo del Té to Tivoli. It's everything that a world's fair should be: extravagant, exotic, memorable, and most important of all, fun. *M.F.*

TAKING FLYTE WITH SUMMER ENCORES

This year, the boys of summer won't all be playing baseball, because on July 11 the Brideshead team returns. *Brideshead Revisited* (PBS) is easily one of the finest programs ever to be on television. The second time around, watch the details—interiors, costumes, and nuances of character wonderfully crafted by Nickolas Grace (Anthony Blanche), John Gielgud (Edward Ryder), and Laurence Olivier (Lord Marchmain), who won an Emmy for his role. The series, which renewed an interest in teddy bears,



Anthony Andrews, Diana Quick and Jeremy Irons at Brideshead.

dropped waists, and Evelyn Waugh, is well worth eleven Monday nights.

Another acclaimed PBS series, set miles away from Mayfair and the twenties, is *Masterpiece Theatre*'s *A Town Like Alice* (beginning July 3). Set in Malaysia during World War II, the six-part series, based on Nevil Shute's best-seller, is a love triangle punctuated with missed opportunities and lengthy separations and is consistently well acted by Helen Morse (Jean Paget), Bryan Brown (Joe Harmon) and Gordon Jackson (Noel Strachan). *Gabrielle Winkel*

A CERAMIC SCULPTOR'S ART ABOUT ART

What is the relationship between the work of art and the reality that inspired it? This is the question raised by each of the little clay sculptures of Katherine Sokolnikoff. It is a big question, although the sculptor's answers to it are small-scale, witty, and light-hearted, rather than grandiose or heavily metaphysical. Sokolnikoff's work was recently the subject of a one-woman show at The Hudson River Museum in Yonkers, New York, and a group show at SUNY's Neuberger Museum in Purchase. The first surprise offered by her ceramics is the "reality" they seem to suggest; for it is not the natural world that is assumed to be real in Sokolnikoff's work, but rather the two-dimensional realm of art: the world of art as it is embodied in famous paintings like Cézanne's *Still Life with a basket of Apples* in The Art Institute of Chicago, or van Gogh's *Wheat Field with Cypresses.* Often, in the case of great masterpieces, we have simply stopped thinking about them or seeing them; we merely accept them. It is Sokolnikoff's enterprise to jolt us back into a recognition of the problematic status of pictures and statues by making us aware of the strategies of their creators, and the assumptions of their audience, at the same time.



Sokolnikoff, *Still Life with a Basket of Apples,* 1982

For Katherine Sokolnikoff, it is as though the flat world of painting were a primary given and the three-dimensional world of our ordinary experience a brilliant science-fiction extrapolation from the "reality" of flat images. There was a memorable book written in the nineteenth century called *Flatland,* about a country that operated in only two dimensions. In that mythical kingdom, the idea of a third dimension was as unthinkable as the existence of a fourth dimension is to inhabitants of our own world: a fantastic concept, available only to high flights of sci-fi imagination. Sokolnikoff, in her small ceramic universe, operates like a denizen of *Flatland,* inventing the third dimension out of the "flatland" of painting with considerable ingenuity and her own brand of tongue-in-cheek charm. She is particularly successful in reconstituting decorative, highly patterned images like Matisse's *Odalisque,* in which constant reminders of the allover linear and coloristic *(Continued on page 156)*



Above: *Tower and Statue,* 1982.
Below: *Odalisque,* 1982.



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Continued from page 154

patterning of the original are played against the forceful perspective effect of the diagonally projected couch and curvacious solidity of the subject in the ceramic version. This clay



Decapitated Nude, 1982

simulacrum is obviously intended to be a sculpture rendition of the painting, not a return to the original situation of model posing in the painter's studio. The tiled walls of the "background" are as much a part of the three-dimensional conception here as the figure itself. What makes this work particularly engaging is our knowledge that Matisse himself was a sculptor as well as a painter, but that Sokolnikoff's own sculptural version of Matisse has nothing whatever to do with Matisse's own sculpture, which is always serious, bronze, and emphatically non-decorative. It is the two-dimensional reality offered by Matisse's painting that inspires Sokolnikoff, not the French artist's sculptural precedents.

The harder a painter seems to have struggled to transform things in the world into a system of relationships on the flat plane of the canvas, the more Sokolnikoff seems to delight in taking that system, that flatness, literally. In Cézanne's *Basket of Apples,* the neatly stacked biscuits in the background are made to recede in perspective and diminish in scale as they would in order to establish a credible sense of space in the flat painting, even though this of course destroys their credibility as tangible objects on the table in relationship to the equally tangible little apples, the bottle, and the tablecloth. But of course, that is just what Sokolnikoff wants to do: to remind us constantly of the deliberately painterly strategies—devices that work *only* on the flat surface—in the originals she is working from. One of the most ruthless revelations is that effected by Sokolnikoff's version of a Pearlstein nude: headless, of course. Has this model been sadistically mutilated? Certainly not. The sculptor has simply constructed a literal three-dimensional equivalent of Pearlstein's trademark—the partial view—rendering in ceramic the way the edge of his canvas systematically interrupts his naked subjects, thereby rendering them anonymous and, at the same time, demonstrating the painter's privilege of cutting off his subject where he will with the boundaries of his support. Projected into three dimensions, however, this exercise of two-dimensional stylistic will suddenly becomes more menacing, more like an execution than a formal decision. Sokolnikoff's piece is a demonstration of the fact that the same artistic strategy—here, fragmentation of the human body—has vastly different expressive implications when cast in a sculptural mode rather than a pictorial one. In other words, the work, and its subject, may indeed suffer in translation.

Yet on the other hand, Sokolnikoff's sculptural transpositions may reveal added dimensions of warmth and human tenderness missing in the painted original. In her versions of Mary Cassatt's *The Bath,* she focuses attention on the motif of mother and child, rather than integrating these figures into the richly patterned texture of the composition as a whole, which is what Mary Cassatt achieved by means of Japanese-inspired uptilted perspective in her far cooler, more aesthetically distanced original. And the mysterious, light-revealed tactility of Vermeer's Dutch interior is considerably diminished in



Child Care, 1982

Sokolnikoff's far more banal, prosaic version, with its garishly patterned Oriental carpet whipped up like a soufflé in the foreground. The portentous implications of the empty vistas and menacing arcades of De Chirico's Scuola Metafisica cityscape are reduced to a dollhouse stage for miniature Halloween pranks in Sokolnikoff's version. Sokolnikoff's ceramics manage to deflate the pretentions of the pictorial traditions we automatically accept as highly serious by reducing them to the level of inspired bric-a-brac. Although her works may be small-scaled, and, on first glance, childlike in their apparent artlessness, there is really nothing naïve about Sokolnikoff's ceramics. On the contrary, their sophistication in dealing with the problematic relationship between the three-dimensional and the two-dimensional and the thorny interaction of art and reality establishes them as provocative on the conceptual level as well as on the sculptural one. □

Linda Nochlin

TRANSCENDENT MUSIC ON A STRANGE INSTRUMENT

You've seen a player piano, surely, although as a household adornment the instrument is a little past its prime. The player looked like any big upright piano, and you could play it like one if you wanted. But it had an additional feature. A long roll of paper wound from one spool to another; it had holes punched in it corresponding to piano notes and a complex pneumatic device that worked the keys that corresponded to those holes. A pianist made a piano roll by playing the piece at the keyboard of a player-piano equipped to punch its own holes, and the resultant roll was as good as that pianist's performance.

But with proper punching equipment and a piano in good shape, you could punch holes to create far more complex piano music, faster and with the most abstract mathematical relationships between, say 97 notes in the right hand against 95 in the left. It could be a wildly adventurous kind of music—at least if you did it as well as Conlon Nancarrow has in the 35 or so years since he first began his remarkable experiments.

Born in Arkansas in 1912, Nancarrow studied in Cincinnati and Boston and had a decent American career as a jazz musician and composer. In 1937, however, that phase ended when he joined the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, an American volunteer corps fighting against the rise of fascism in Spain. On returning to the U.S. he found his political leanings not in official favor, and he moved to Mexico City, where he has lived and worked since. Not until he was invited to a new-music festival in San Francisco in the summer of 1981 did Conlon Nancarrow revisit his native land.

By then, however, he was famous. Tapes circulated and commercial recordings followed later (three disks so far on the 1750 Arch label and more to come); composers around the world came under the spell of his music, not merely for its tricks, but for its honest charm, its rhythmic energy, the message it gives out of a genuinely original composer whose music transcends its curious medium. He belongs in that special band of Americans—think of Henry Cowell, John Cage, Harry Partch—whose musical outlook begins with a hearty nose-thumbing at tradition and reaches toward limitless horizons.

I visited Nancarrow recently, in his lovely small home on the edge of Mexico City. I marveled at the wisdom of the man, at the library he has amassed on every conceivable kind of wisdom. We talked about African music, about food, about his bright-eyed eleven-year old son whose Atari I had by a lucky guess been able to repair. Then he led me to a sealed-off vault where his two player pianos stand side by side and played me his new piece, Canon X. [illegible] The music throbbed: twenty minutes of incredible vibrance, clashing rhythms, zooming cascades of scales and arpeggios that no living set of fingers could match. There, in an airless room in the oldest city on this continent, I stood at the portal of a world newer than new. □

Alan Rich



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[illegible] the ex of a war goddess all right, with this substantial difference from Wagner's: she was the summer goddess of destroying time, the double-faced deity who is both life-giver and devourer, who returns yearly with her bounty and simultaneously warns us of our eventual return to dust.

Poets These most accurate sensors of the collective psyche tend to take a Russian, disconsolate view of summer. Name me one masterpiece whose euphoria for July or August is equal to Wordsworth's for his April daffodils, or Keats's for the mellow fruitfulness of autumn. Poets have tended to deplore summer's transience rather than praise its beauty: "[its] lease hath all too short a date." They use it to scan our years, measure the threat of advancing age. "Three score summers have I seen," "after many a summer dies the swan." Its beauty strikes poets as fickle, deceptive. "Eternal summer gilds them yet" (Byron on the isles of Greece, "but all, except their sun, is set." Little of springtime's elation in summer verses (" . . . sweet Spring is the year's pleasant king") none of the guileless bounty of autumn, which comes "jovial on, crowned with the sickle and the wheaten sheaf."

Although the word "summer" is never mentioned in it, the only lyric masterpiece about that season that comes to mind is Marvell's *The Garden,* whose prehensile images offer nature on the rampage:

"The luscious clusters of the vine
Upon my mouth do crush their wine;
The nectarine and curious peach
Into my hands themselves do reach;
Stumbling on melons, as I pass,
Ensnared with flowers, I fall on grass."

And the quintessence of summer in the couplet that soon follows!

"Annihilating all that's made
To a green thought in a green shade."

The first stanza of Yeats's *Sailing to Byzantium* is about a country of perpetual summer where nature has run amuck to threaten all civility and social order, where "Caught in that sensual music all neglect/Monuments of unaging intellect."

As for Pushkin, he is downright derogatory about our season: "Oh glorious summer! I would have loved you if it weren't for the heat, the dust, the mosquitoes, the flies."

I have a theory about poets' distrust of summer. It is in this most rapacious of seasons that the ambivalence facing all writers becomes most poignant: our desire to drench in the world for inspiration, our simultaneous fear that this contact will drown our powers; our contradictory need for participation and withdrawal, for summer's frenzied elation and winter's quietude; a choice in which most writers would choose winter, what Thoreau called "Life near the bone where it is sweetest."

The dilemma transcends poetry, reaches every one of us: vernal, orgiastic need to be engulfed in the Cosmic Whole (or the Lover); simultaneous desire to preserve, undiminished, the wintry fortress of Self.

"Beautiful Summer" Brainwashed by the joys of Aunt Simone's Arcadian Julys, by the perilous association of rural plenitude with marital bliss, I grew up, from the age of ten, saying that I wished to marry a gentleman farmer. My imagination grew fervid with prospects of cultivating perfect roses, of rooms filled with dogs and children, of guest-filled tables groaning under my exquisite food.

"A gentleman farmer!" exclaimed my friends (those who knew me best). "You'll go crazy!" I married one. My friends were almost right.

For I immediately set out, upon moving to the country 26 summers ago, to re-create the smells and tastes of Aunt Simone's gardens, kitchen, larders. I planted salsify, Belgian endive, fennel, Jerusalem artichokes, white asparagus, all manner of fare ill-suited to our more arduous New England climes. But there were no more Cains and Abels to cultivate a garden; there was, at best, a hapless occasional teenager who barely knew the difference between parsley and rhubarb; my husband, a kind but Puritanical man who looks on any method of lessening work as vaguely sinful, prohibited mulch with the sternness of Jonathan Edwards banning Sunday debauchery. And within a few weeks my first and long-desired garden loomed before me brown and grim and bare as a grave. Hoyotoho the foot-high weeds shouted at me, hoyotoho they continued throughout the summer, threatening to choke the few prosaic crops—beans, carrots, squash—which had deigned to grow. By mid-August my Slavic temperament had quite overcome my French one. I dug through the garden sobbing about the ravages of time on my life, dutifully storing into the tyrannical freezer thirty quarts of peas, baby corn, and puréed pumpkin, putting up fifty jars of rose geranium jelly . . . a simple leap from those early years to the August evening that finds me loathing summer, loony friend giggling upstairs, self-invited guests on the rampage, immense unusable zucchini shipped out as lewd jokes to horny friends.

Survival Tactics Feminist Manifesto: "Sisters! Unite against the tyrannies of summer. Until men equally compromise their careers for the cause of parenting, gardening, and entertaining summer guests, women will not be enabled to have an equal voice in society. . . ."

Translation: Discard all self-images, all previous role models having to do with nurturing (oh, my dear Aunt Simone). Admit that we're all our own worst oppressors. Dare not to impress one single person between the months of June and September. Dare to be as selfish as men have been for centuries. Dare to be slothful. Dare to become again the tranquil, lounging creature of Childe Hassam's painting.

Heed the skeptics who've never been brainwashed by summer's propaganda, like many of my French contemporaries, among whom summer is out. *"L'été, quelle horreur . . . je déteste les couleurs, c'est tellement con, ce bleu et ce vert."*

Learn to lie: "Dear Nora, I can't possibly read your manuscript this summer, for I'm about to leave for (Rome) (New Delhi) (Istanbul) on a six-month sabbatical." "Dear Dan, How good to hear you'll be driving by

us on the last weekend of July! I'd love to give you dinner, but I'm just ending a bout of hepatitis, and I'll remain infectious for some months. . . ."

Summer Recaptured Armed with a few such tactics, I have recently become more reconciled. My favorite summer days are spent alone by the side of an ancient, cracking, primitively kept-up swimming pool, on the same spot where almost a quarter of a century ago I sat pregnant with each of my two children; where I later saw them take their first steps, admired the sweetness of their naked bodies, heard them speak some of their first words. They are now tall men in their twenties who speak of things far beyond my understanding, such as microeconomics, and the eighteen-inch pine saplings planted two decades ago tower thirty feet above me.

On a late August day I seek refuge here to regather the energies dispersed by the Valkyries of summer, look forward to the potential sweetness of the few decades that remain ahead, accept with increasing serenity that most difficult message of summer—the irreversibility of time.

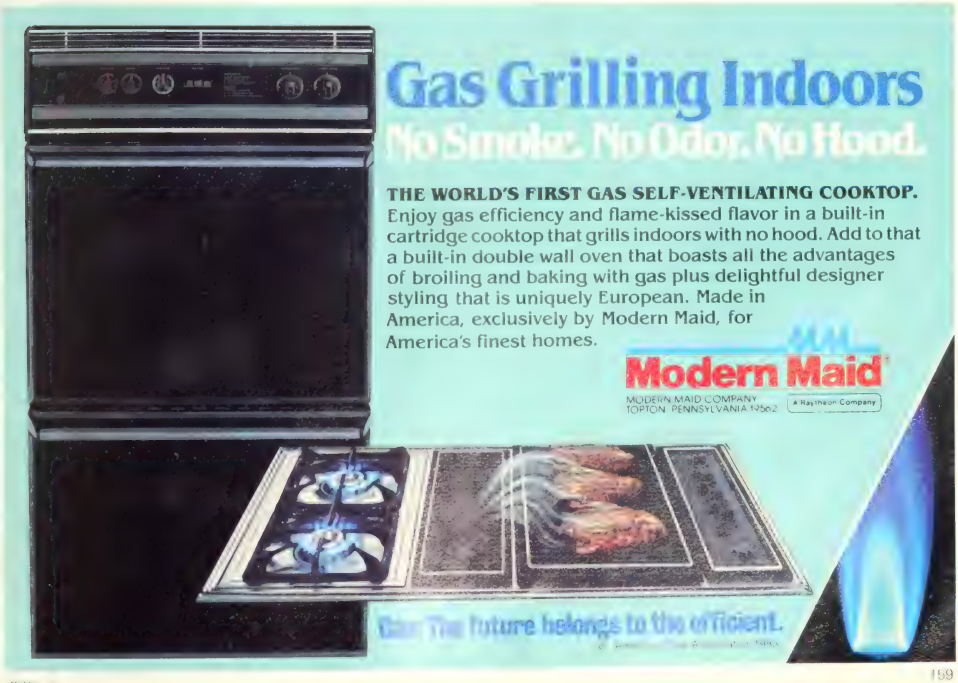
Toward afternoon's end I walk to the vegetable garden to pick a dinner (garden safely contained now to a quarter of its former size, sanely mulched a half-foot deep with hay). Relief of the earth's forthcoming sleep, barely audible hoyotoho of slowed, late growth. I look with particular affection at those tenacious crops that scorn summer's fickle, frenzied brevity—the parsley that will survive many frosts, the obstinate succulence of beets and carrots that will yield into Thanksgiving week. I already start replanning next spring's garden (less tomatoes, lettuce rows closer together), marveling at the elemental drive that still urges us to this detestable, satisfying task. The subconscious mind tolerates many contradictions, and few aspects of reality are more replete with them than summer. . . . On the way back to the house I think back to certain days of the past season that were surely some of the year's happiest, that were, perhaps, a life's perfect day.

Gathering dew-burdened peonies and Japanese irises shortly after dawn for a huge bouquet.

Taking a walk on the nearby Appalachian Trail with four or five friends; splendor of the Cathedral Pines near Cornwall inspiring one of us to sing Schubert lieder (which are mostly about spring and autumn).

Rapacious pleasure of finding a crop of wild mushrooms in the woods. Bringing them home, many hands in the kitchen to help out with a marvelous dinner.

As many generations as possible at the table, ranging from late infancy to the hoary seventies, my own children inviting many friends. Fruition, abundance, procreation, tribe, the joy at all that teeming growth and venerable age seated at the table. . . . Summer, I say to myself when recalling such a day, there's nothing like it; and tomorrow is September first. □



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(Continued from page 53) was finally able to buy the Daylesford estate and build, between 1790 and 1796, a house in the Neoclassical style designed by Samuel Pepys Cockerell, later Surveyor to the East India Company. The interior was decorated in the Indian taste; on the exterior only the Orangerie gives a clue that Cockerell also designed nearby Sezincote. Here, building for his brother, Sir Charles Cockerell, the architect threw all caution to the winds. Its onion domes seem straight out of India, and it is said to have been the inspiration for the "Indianization" of the Royal Pavilion at Brighton.

From sale catalogues of 1818 and 1858 we learn that in addition to ivory tables and chairs and Indian carpets and curtains in the drawing room, there was much eighteenth-century German furniture in the house: Hastings had married the widow of the German portrait painter Imhoff.

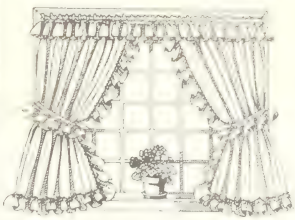
Mrs. Hastings was something of an eccentric, and in contrast to her husband's unostentatious dress, according to one observer, she "habitually wore an enormous quantity of jewels and she dressed according to her own taste, disregarding fashion."

In Warren Hastings's time, Daylesford housed a small and distinguished collection of old master paintings, Indian scenes by Hodges, miniatures and Persian drawings, Stubbs paintings of a yak and of Hastings's favorite mare, and the conversation pieces and portraits by Zoffany that have left us with a memorable record of life in eighteenth-century India. In 1785 alone Zoffany billed Hastings for nine pictures, including *Colonel Mordaunt's Cock Match,* famous as a scene of Anglo-Indian life at the brilliant and dissipated court of Oudh.

Hastings died in 1818, and following the death of his stepson, Sir Charles Imhoff, Daylesford passed out of the family in 1873; during World War II it even housed a school. In 1946 the late Viscount Rothermere bought the property and began its restoration with the help of John Fowler. This has been brilliantly finished by the Thyssens and Mongiardino.

It is a happy turn of fate that Daylesford should again belong to a great collector and become the home of beautiful possessions. One cannot help thinking how much Warren Hastings would approve. □

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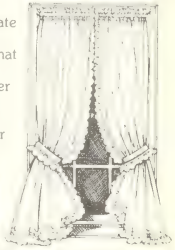
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WEEDS: THUGS OF THE PLANT WORLD

By Anthony Huxley



This page: Plantain in a woodcut from Mattioli's *Commentaires on Dioscordides* (Venice, 1563). *Opposite, clockwise from top left:* Woodcuts from Mattioli (1563) and Gerard (1633): couch grass, soapwort, horsetail, thistle, bindweed, and dandelion.

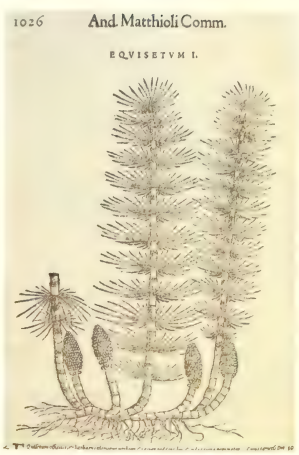
Weeds—*pleasure?* I can imagine the reaction from most gardeners, whose response to weeds may range from a low-level fury to resigned acceptance. I agree that gardening would be much more relaxed if there were no weeds. But since they are always with us, let me suggest that there is pleasure, certainly interest, to be gained from weeds.

The first line of pleasure for many people will probably be sadistic. Pull, scrape, hoe, dig—out with them! Pour on chemicals and watch them curl up! But there is more to them than that. As I crouch or kneel—for in the dense-packed flower garden there is really no other way to deal with weeds—I contemplate them as individuals, wonder how they got into our gardens, muse on their history.

This must bring up the question, what *is* a weed? The classic definition is "a plant in the wrong place." But this is not enough. A choice garden plant may seed or root into a clump of another, or appear in the wrong setting; but it is surely not thereby a weed. Most of us, spotting such a stray, will dig it out with care and find a better place for it; the wild-inclined gardener may make a virtue out of accident and enjoy the association he had not planned.













No, a weed is more than a misplaced plant. It is, in biological terms, one *designed* for opportunism—which has evolved, as in Webster's definition of a carpetbagger, to "take advantage of disturbed conditions." This is what I find fascinating about weeds: they carry to extremes the built-in drive of every living organism to reproduce, replicate itself, compete with its neighbors. Thus they swamp, overshadow, and starve more desirable plants.

Most plants have limited territorial ambitions. Your true weed can, within certain climatic thresholds, grow almost anywhere. This is seen best in plants originating in one country that have gone berserk in another, where they have usually been introduced as ornamentals. What looks charming in its native land may develop into an aggressive thug in a new environment.

Some of the worst perennial weeds in the United States are of this kind: Kudzu vine, ailanthus, Japanese honeysuckle, and Japanese knotweed, *Rosa multiflora*, which started as a hedger; bouncing bet or soapwort (at least you can use it to wash your hands), tawny day lily, false dragonhead, and plume poppy, all from the Old World or the Orient, not to mention common *(Continued on page 164)*

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(Continued from page 163) or garden mint—all can spread disastrously. Water hyacinth from South America now clogs waterways in the southern states and in similar places all over the world.

Not all these are weeds in Britain, where ornamental garden menaces include acanthus, alstroemeria, winter heliotrope, hardy geraniums, creeping bellflower, and many small bulbs. Many plants recommended as labor-saving groundcovers can readily turn into aggressive weeds themselves. The pink oxalis is a special terror, increasing by tiny bulbils that drop off the parent root at a touch. Until recently the only agricultural recommendation against oxalis was to run young pigs in infested areas (the bulbils pass through mature ones unharmed!); now there is a chemical control, but it cannot be used in gardens. Visitors to the Mediterranean will have seen the yellow oxalis carpeting the olive groves. It was introduced from South Africa to Bermuda by a gardener, and so got the name Bermuda buttercup, thence to the Mediterranean and many other warm countries. The irony is that every plant descended from the Bermudan ancestor is seed-sterile; they increase by bulbils alone. The Latin name, *pes-caprae* (goat's foot), is evocative of its means of spread.

Without man's intervention none of these invasions would have happened. To start with, weeds colonize the unnatural habitats that man creates by building earthworks, cultivation, forest burning, road making, and so on. In Britain, for example, the fireweed owed its wide spread to the making of the railways, taking charge of the raw edges and cuttings of the lines.

As soon as man started to travel anywhere around the world, his local weeds came with him—on boots, clothing, animal skins, among desirable seeds or roots, in packing materials—the ways are endless. The plantain, that plague of lawns, was brought to North America by the Pilgrim Fathers, possibly with wheat seed, and spread wherever they cultivated: the Indians called it "Englishman's Foot." One of the weeds we hate most in Britain, ground elder or goutweed, was brought here by the Romans as a culinary green and to cure gout, and you can find such uses in weeds as *(Continued on page 166)*

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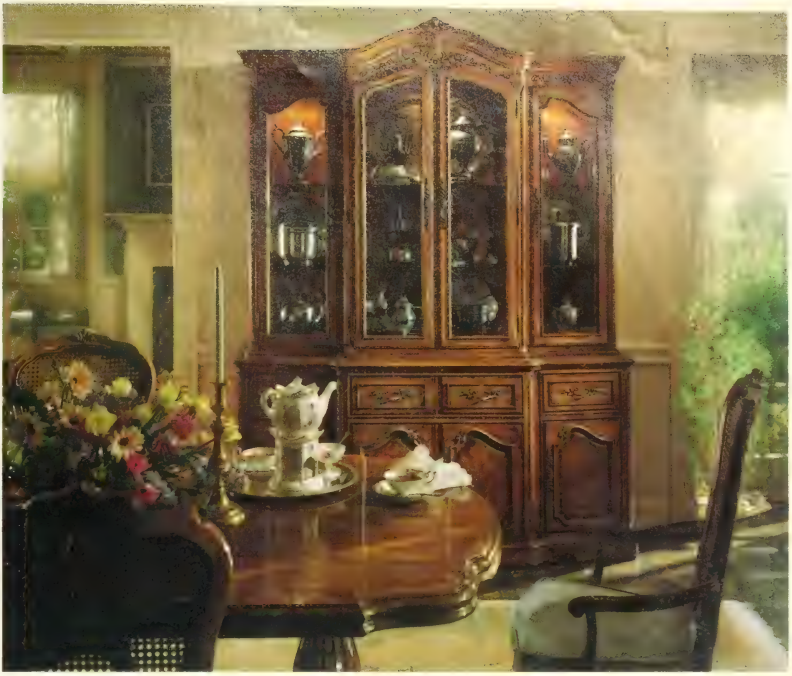
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THE MAGAZINE OF CREATIVE LIVING
Volume 155, Number 8

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Dancing masks decorate the corner walls of Frida Kahlo's dining room. Story begins on page 98. Photograph by Evelyn Hofer.

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ROUTE DU MANDARIN

NEO-EXPRESSIONISM: A RICHER FARE

A critical look at a "new" movement in art

By Lee Hall



The hand of master Expressionist Willem de Kooning

The art world buzzes with chat about the Neo-Expressionism filling the galleries, the pages of art magazines, and beginning to occupy space on the walls of collectors and museums. Serious critics muse over the bedaubed canvases called Neo-Expressionist. Curators scramble to locate and mine the antecedents of the new Expressionism.

We are told, indeed, that a new movement, a new school, has come to town and that it deserves serious attention and vigorous collecting. This new wave, we are promised, will wash meaning back into contemporary art. After the slick surfaces and quick-food ideas of Pop Art and the High Tech experiments of minimalism and conceptualism, we are ready for a richer fare.

Some of the work that goes its own way under the banner of Neo-Expressionism is wonderful, whether insouciant or poignant. Some, however, is mindless junk. The good work, by good artists, is deeply rooted in tradition and, like good art of whatever style, carries strong emotional and intellectual impact. It trades in real coin and does not need the hype that fouls the air now regarding Neo-Expressionism.

I'm loath to accept the term Neo-Expressionist and, equally, reluctant to define and characterize as new or as even a school this loosely configured group of razzle-dazzle artists and their work. Expressionism is a longstanding and well-documented concern within the tradition and history of visual art.

Expressionism is based on a depiction of nonobjective reality through subjective impact—emotions and response—embodied in or evoked by objects and events. Work wrought by Expressionist artists may be soaringly and piercingly truthful, deeply felt, and gloriously evocative of human mortality and grandeur. The same surging force of emotion, however, may manifest merely the most tired and most pathetic fallacies, may dish up only cold small potatoes.

The Expressionist pursuit has caught the attention and energies of artists since prehistoric times. Expressionism is an essential human tendency and, like fingerprints, an unavoidable accoutrement to being alive. Nothing perceived or made, no object or event, no smallest organic shift within ourselves exists without emotional impact, and more importantly, without a reference to or reflection of ourselves. But we continually navigate the seas and eddies of expression whether or not we do so in art. Expressionism in art recurs throughout history and it changes in style and substance to suit the needs of a particular age. We've a passel of examples in any museum.

In recent years, real giants of the Expressionist persuasion have been among us and at work in clear sight. Both Willem de Kooning and Reuben Nakian, for example, qualify as Expressionist artists of highest rank. Each engages his materials—paint, terra cotta, or bronze—in the drama and passion requisite in Expressionistic works. Neither, however, suggests in his work that tortured paint or affronted clay or mauled bronze will Expressionism make. Neither disgorges careless passion. Both artists win the stakes in Expressionism primarily because they so succinctly, forcefully give form to feeling. They are *(Continued on page 12)*



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Above left: Richard Bosman, *Harvest,* oil on canvas 96 by 48 inches, Brooke Alexander *Center:* Reuben Nakian, *Leda and the Swan,* 1982, terra cotta with glazes, 20 inches diameter. Marlborough. *Above right:* Willem de Kooning, *Untitled XI,* 1981, oil on canvas, 60 by 54 inches. Xavier Fourcade.

Expressionism is like fingerprints, an unavoidable accoutrement to being alive

(Continued from page 10) artists first, Expressionists later.

The ability to assign or find form in feeling is the mark of a mature artist. All of us are swept before our feelings with scarcely time to see them whole, let alone give them name or symbol. Artists, in this respect, are unlike other people, for they seize and name feelings, fit feeling to feeling in lucid joinery, explain and clarify the driving forces of living to us.

Elaine de Kooning once remarked that Franz Kline's vast black and white gestural and Expressionist paintings had both the force and confusion of reality, that they were a reality very much like a ride on the subway or some other daily, almost missed, experience. She was speaking, I think, about the seemingly simple appearance of Kline's work, the sort of thing that still prompts wags to remark that anyone (preferably a four-year-old son or daughter) could produce that.

Here, I believe, is the essence of Expressionism. An artist sees the nature and energy of feeling, gives it shape so as to make it intelligible, that is, easy to understand. Expression is the basic molecule of communication among human beings.

Nakian is an excellent case in point. Over the years since 1945, he has explored mythology and brings into being fragments of ancient truths as if they were at once particles found in an archaeological dig and completely new apprehensions of the truth inherent in myth and unchanging in the human species. His work is ancient and innocent at once, full of wisdom and awe at discovery. I cannot be sure whether he finds Leda amidst the swans or meets her in a dream and hears her story. No matter. I am sure that he recounts pellucidly the power and mystery of myth from first-hand encounters with its truths.

Similarly, de Kooning drives into the storm of paint that he whips up and finds women, finds ghosts and specters and all manner of hags and crones as well as vestiges of sex-goddesses, mothers, movie stars, and mythic females. Planes and volumes of the female figure fade, become distorted, reshaped, reborn in paint so as to present a reality within art, a reality that eludes us in everyday seeing and knowing. We do not see women in the supermarket who look like de Kooning's women but, sometimes, we see women whom we know to be de Kooning's women. He peels away the shapes, physical limitations, and definitions of women to reveal the sometimes suffering and sometimes mad soul of woman. His knowledge, and therefore his expression, exceeds the partial truths available to us as we look at a woman skating, a woman in a hairdresser's chair, a woman walking or smiling or talking.

Art expresses or evokes the deepest and most important feelings and attitudes of human beings. It is the job of art to give us vision that is not otherwise available to us, to give us a clarity of feeling and a direction and form for knowing that would not otherwise be within our grasp.

The styles and fashions of art may change, but the basic urge to make and comprehend art remains a force within our species and, during each age, we produce objects that we find believable, important, thrilling.

Artists currently mapping the lands of Expressionism vary in image and intensity, in technique and authenticity. Still, the message is clear: Expressionism (never mind neo) once again provides occasion for human beings to share feeling, to speculate on the form appropriate to feeling in our age and within our kind.

Richard Bosman, born in India and educated in England, studied painting at the New York Studio School where, like many other young artists of his generation, he worked with liquid acrylic paint. The material didn't suit his temperament, however, and he turned to the more solid, slower-drying oil paints that he now trowels and knifes onto his large, frequently strongly vertical, paintings. He is en-

thralled by the power of the sea, by the energy and brute force of tide and wave trough. As he places human figures upon turbulent seas, he shows their tensions, their terrors, their frailty on the great sweeping primal water. His brush strokes—or, more properly, his knife swipes—lay paint on boldly and thickly with heavy vertical emphasis. Sometimes paint cuts through other paint and color interweaves with impasto color. He forfeits nothing in power as he simplifies his images.

Louise Fishman confronts violence without images as she swirls and presses paint onto surfaces. Her paintings are dense and aggressive, almost bludgeoning. The paint is stretched, scraped, cut, and roughly handled as if to capture violent acts and brutal, explosive feelings. There, on those raw surfaces, forces refuse gentling.

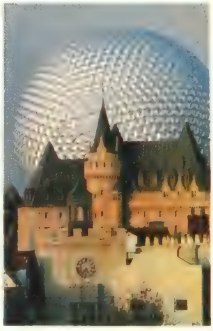
Fishman's work recalls the tough surfaces and gestural compositions of some of the most impressive Abstract Expressionist painters. I think especially of George McNeil and John Opper who, at different times in their fecund careers, have activated paint with fierce energies, have made it difficult to look straight on at fears and festivals that might have been held offstage in a more formal or decorous age.

Robert Beauchamp forthrightly acknowledges his growth from Abstract Expressionism to his current style, which incorporates monstrous figures, human and animal, into quickly and vigorously brushed surfaces. He derives much of his vision of painting from his studies with Hans Hofmann, the quintessential Expressionist painter who, through his teaching, influenced at least two generations of American painters. But Beauchamp asks recognizable images to carry the weight in his work. So does Deborah Butterfield, who constructs life-sized horses from mud, plaster, twigs, wire, and string. Her horses express the frailty of horses, those great bodies suspended on thin legs and walking on what amounts to their third digits evolved into hooves. Vast and tender, deeply alive but so old and archaeological-seeming as to be beyond death, Butterfield's horses embody mortality, prop it up on flimsy legs, build it of crumbling substances, string it together in tense filament. She does not need the human figure to show us the human condition. Her horses objectify our own emotional reality.

Expressionism, in its many guises of past and present, is an attitude that takes shape as intellectual and emotional construction in visual art. The search continues for the objects and images that will express emotional reality. But, as has always been the case for us human beings, emotional reality is almost as elusive, even speculative, as the ivory-billed woodpecker. Sightings should be documented and tested. Somewhere in the swamp, safe from the hunters, both the great woodpecker and emotional reality may be waiting for the right beholder. □



EPCOT: MORE THAN JUST MICKEY MOUSE



A theme park's variations on corporate America

By Alexander Cockburn

I took my daughter to Disney World not so long after it opened. The central Florida sun beat down savagely on her fair English skin and she came to resemble an unhappy tomato. For the remainder of our stay we moved in shadow as much as possible. Boat rides through cool tunnels were particularly esteemed and thus it was that we got stuck in the Small, Small World tour. Some temporary glitch in the usually perfect Disney-system becalmed us amid tiny Audio-Animatronic dolls, all singing "It's a Small, Small World" in hideously piping voices.

I began to panic and under the reproving gaze of the old people with which our barge was filled I seized Daisy and swung my legs over the side, intending to wade toward the small, small circle of light at the end of the tunnel. Before I could get mangled by the track machinery, the barge started moving and soon we were safely docked. I got a Disney-style telling off all the same from a dapper attendant in white. In Disney World you soon become ashamed of doing bad things, like dropping candy wrappers or using profane language, in front of good people. A sort of gooey superego takes over, and you proceed slowly through the Magic Kingdom, purged of all the usual emotions of lust, impatience, and hatred of mankind.

A large portion of this trancelike state is induced by the renowned Disney suspension of the normal order of things: a cleanliness unrivaled since Eden, famously achieved through nocturnal steam-cleaning of the streets; freedom from sin in whatever combinations of sex and violence. For all the old people who flocked to the Magic Kingdom, it is above all a Safe, Safe World, with Mickey and Donald and an inconspicuous but watchful Disney security force *(Continued on page 16)*



Top: Bell System's eighteen-story geodesic sphere, Spaceship Earth, looms behind Canada's French Gothic Pavilion. *Above:* The crystal pavilions of Kodak's Journey into Imagination.

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As the Magic Kingdom subdues the terrors of childhood and the ambiguous allure of the fairy tale, so too does Epcot conquer conventional dimension

(Continued from page 14) guarding the outer approaches to a Main Street forever decent.

Landscape and architecture reinforce this suspension of immoral norms. Age never withers the flowers, for they are replaced long before the petals droop. Vast arrays of them surround the "guests"—as all paying customers to Disney World are termed—and they perform, along with the shrubs and hedges, a dual function: soothing eyes strained from the hot, blue sky and the endless search for a cunningly elusive Mouse, but also keeping guests inflexibly to the straight and narrow.

Crowd-control meets the fairy story: this is the heart of the matter. The premise of fairy stories, of a magic kingdom, is the uncertainty and danger of adventure: "Once upon a time a little girl got lost in a wood. . . ." The premise of Disney World is getting 12.5 million people a year safely through the Magic Kingdom, across the Seven Seas Lagoon, in and out of the lavatories, monorail, and restaurants with the certainty that all but a highly aberrant minority will not end up peeing in a flower bed or be locked into the Haunted Mansion when darkness falls and, as night thickens and the crow makes wings to the rooky wood, the gates to the Kingdom are locked.

Mystery only comes to the Kingdom in these hours, and you hear the guests discussing it. What they talk about is, literally, the Disney Underworld of tunnels, service areas, vacuum sewage tubes—which is the service area for the Kingdom, a few feet below it. Tucked up in our beds in the A-frame Contemporary Resort Hotel, hamburgers washed down by virtuous beverages of a non-alcoholic nature, Daisy and I used to speculate about this Underworld—the only spice of mystery in the Kingdom: at the stroke of midnight the cleaning goblins popping up into Main Street to straighten things out; weary Mickeys, Minnies, Donalds, and Goofys scuttling home along the tunnels, masks removed to reveal—we had been told—tiny people with aged, wrinkled faces. Later still, my sunburned child asleep at last, I would imagine the Disney staffers, suntanned Rick and cleanly Sandra, canoodling among the snoozing dolls of a Small, Small World briefly but blessedly tranquil.

I had never thought I would visit Disney World again, unless at a time when I am too enfeebled to fend off kindly relatives wishing to take me there in my dotage. Daisy is of an age when Las Vegas probably has more allure than Cinderella's castle. But with the opening of the long-awaited Epcot addition to Disney World, it seemed meet for any serious student of the American environment to take a fresh look at what is now heralded as the major tourist attraction of the planet.

I was alone this time and felt a little like Ulysses returning to Ithaca after twenty years on the road. Were the dolls still singing, each to each? They were indeed, a Disney executive informed me. Richard Nixon had taken his grandchildren through the Small World tunnel no less than three times only the previous week. The Contemporary Resort Hotel looked the same as I got down off the train, a monorail as dapper as it had been seven years before. The only big change was the hotel game room, now stuffed with video machines. Across the Seven Seas Lagoon came wafting Handel's Water Music, as neon dolphins gamboled in a *son et lumière* display.

The next morning I set off eagerly for Epcot, twenty minutes by monorail to another sector of the 28,000 acre Disney spread. Now EPCOT is short for "Experimental Prototype Community Of Tomorrow," and any guest will soon come across the original Epcot manifesto, pronounced by Walt himself. In Epcot "People actually live a life they can't find anywhere else in the world today. Epcot will be a 'living blueprint' of the future. . . a fully operating community. . . ." Here, said Disney, "American free enterprise will constantly test and demonstrate new concepts and technologies. . . ."

This notion that Epcot would be a fully functioning capsule of tomorrow turns out to be hooey. For all the heavy breathing from Disney publicists about "hands on" interaction with computers and new technologies, Epcot is a well-organized but fairly traditional cross between world's fair pavilions and theme parks, in William Chaitkin's words, "predicated on a perfectible near-future of Scientific Progress," and testaments to America's "abiding faith in Better Living Through Electricity"; the other pole of that abiding faith being Main Street, 1910, a few miles across the reclaimed swampland in the Magic Kingdom.

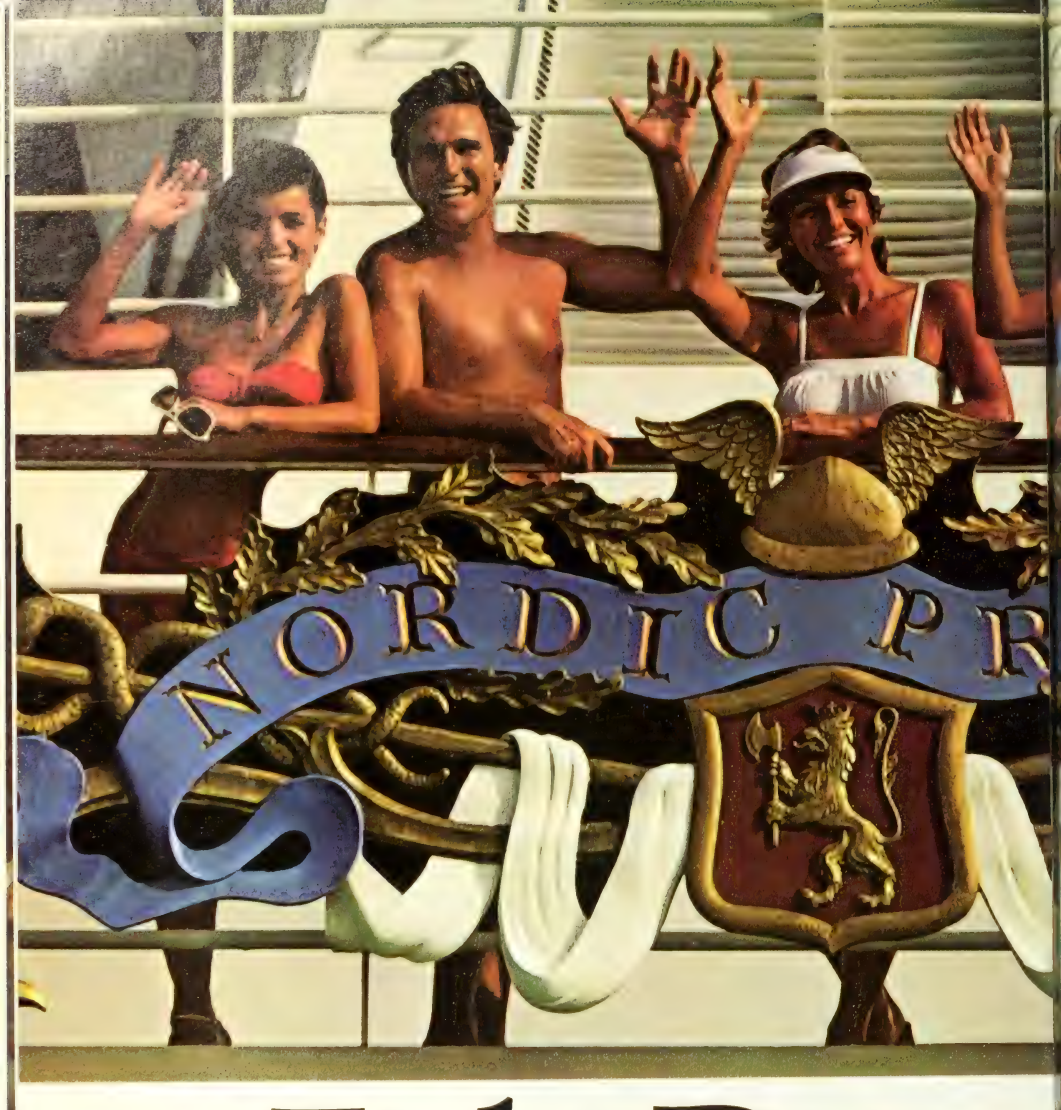
Epcot's lay-out, scaled and modeled with Disney's usual fanatical attention to crowd movement and environmental detail, is something like a figure eight. At the top of the eight, arrival point for the customers, is the visual keynote, an eighteen-story geosphere embodying Spaceship Earth and appropriately sponsored by the Bell System. Flanking the geosphere and its extending "CommuniCore" arms—exposition halls of electronic gadgetry—are other homages to the American century: halls of Motion and Energy on one side, sponsored respectively by General Motors and Exxon; Kodak's Journey into Imagination and Kraft's "The Land" pavilion are on the other. Not yet opened when I was there earlier this year was "The Living Seas" and *(Continued on page 20)*



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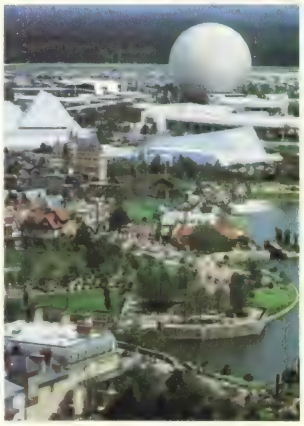
f Freedom For
e Work Ethic.

(Continued from page 16) "Horizons," this last—sponsored by General Electric—being Disney's recollection of futures past, man's utopian visions down the ages.

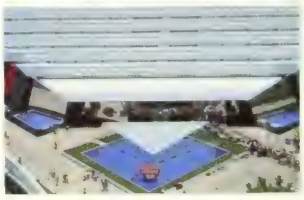
This entire top half of the eight is designated as "Future World," an entity as familiar and comforting as the Fortune 500 blue-chip stocks of the sponsoring corporations, which pay handsomely to have their names on buildings and theme rides dreamed up by the self-styled "imagineers" back in Disney creative headquarters in Glendale, California. Across from the geosphere, at the very bottom of the eight at the far end of a lagoon, the Future looks at the Past in the form of a Neoclassical structure housing the 350,000-pound movable stage, 140-foot seamless screen, 36 Audio-Animatronic figures, and five Sentinel computers necessary to enact "the American Adventure."

And just as the geosphere is flanked by the cream of corporate America, so too is the American Adventure flanked by a vaster equivalent of Main Street, 1910; namely the Grand Tour *world* of 1910—with national pavilions proffering their architectural and commercial specialties: Les Halles, the Piazza San Marco with campanile, some stores from St. James's, a German beerhall, a Japanese restaurant, and whiffs of Canada (wilderness) and Mexico (half tortilla chip and half pre-Columbian artifact). A spectacular 360-degree film of China in the People's Republic completes the tour. Vacant lots await Morocco, Israel, and equatorial Africa.

So just as the Magic Kingdom subdues the terrors of childhood and the ambiguous allure of the fairy tale, so too does Epcot conquer conventional dimension. "Had we but world enough and time . . ." said the poet Marvell to his coy mistress, and Epcot vanquishes both. The sun was angling behind the Japanese pagoda when I began to feel a pang of hunger. It was scarcely lower behind the Eiffel Tower when I entered a *fin de siecle* style restaurant (a co-production of Bocuse, Vergé, and Lenôtre) and had an entirely tolerable meal. In the little *place* outside, a whining child was demanding to eat "in Germany" while his father held out stubbornly for a snack in Japan. "To keep our eyes open longer," Sir Thomas Browne so beautifully wrote, "were but to act our Antipodes. The huntsmen are up in America, and they are already past their first sleep in Persia. . . ." In Epcot we can act our Antipodes within the hour and traverse a hundred millennia in less. In the Exxon pavilion, a rather jolly ride takes you through primal swamp and minatory sauri of one sort or another. A few minutes away in the geosphere another ride carries you through agreeable dioramas of the history of communications, mediated through portentous Disneyspeak ("Glorious Rome, until consumed by the flames of excess").



On the shores of the lagoon, World Showcase where you can take a trip around the world in three hours. *Below:* Exxon's triangular Universe of Energy Building with photo-voltaic cell roof.



And so the afternoon shuttles you across the aeons and the continents until you begin to relish Disney's response to Rimbaud's call for a "*dérèglement de tous les sens,*" a disordering of all the senses. Outside a London telephone box a Disney sheik with an oversized head waves at the guests—OPEC threat domesticated into whimsy. Nearby, a Disney cleaning person is dressed in the kepi and sun kerchief of a French legionnaire, Beau Geste on the job but no Tuaregs over the sand dunes. At the base of the campanile, a youth in the costume of medieval Venice shouts comfortingly to the tourists, "Ladies and gentlemen, right here, on this spot, absolutely nothing is happening."

Epcot is architecture as emblem, a scaled Eiffel Tower announcing France and across the lagoon a wheel-shaped building housing GM's world of motion and theme chant of "It's fun to be free." Double pyramids beckon you to the "Journey into Imagination" and an attractively mirrored Hi Tech echo of Philip Johnson's Crystal Cathedral houses the history of energy, from fossil fuels to a decorous plug for nuclear energy.

Fussiest in design is the "The Land" pavilion sponsored by Kraft, but here too are unexpected joys: coyness raised to a previously unimaginable level of surreality in Kitchen Kabaret ("I think I'll get together with the toast of the town for a jam session" . . . "The yolk's on you," etc.) and a firmly didactic ride through the history and future of agronomy, from nineteenth-century barnyard to hydroponics, to intercropping and the awesome potential of malabar spinach and the wing bean.

Later, in a staff-only greenhouse a resident agronomist, formerly at Purdue, boasted in a low-key way about his pride and joy, "the most advanced integrated pest management scheme in the country" and his staff's relentless investigation into the whys and wherefores of tip burn, scourge of Florida's cabbage growers. At our feet sat rows of cabbages, burgeoning fatly in 25 different varieties, some tip-burned and some not. Thus, at least in this homely vegetable, *(Continued on page 22)*

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(Continued from page 20) does the original Epcot dream live on, in an Experimental Prototype Cabbage Of Tomorrow.

If a perfectly transparent Magic Kingdom would reveal to guests that mysterious Underworld, with its laundry rooms and cleaning goblins waiting for dark, so too would a perfectly transparent Epcot display to its visitors workings that are indeed innovative: the synchronous satellite 24,000 miles up controlling water flow in the 43 square miles of Disney waterways, the computers controlling Ben Franklin's Animatronic blink, monitoring the endless lines that made, in my case, a full tour of Epcot a two twelve-hour-days affair.

In Epcot, Disney seems to have been taken in by the propaganda of its admirers, such as Peter Blake, who remarked in *Form Follows Fiasco* that "some fifty years after Corbusier's first sketch for a Ville Radieuse, the most interesting new town built in the U.S. in this century was completed in a swamp some thirty miles south of Orlando, Florida." This is a stunted view of architecture, town planning, and indeed, civilization.

No, the achievement is slightly different and it came to me near midnight as I tottered out of the "Journey into Imagination" and headed toward the monorail and a ride back to the A-frame Contemporary. Suppose mankind were to quit the planet but leave the lights on in Disney World. An extraterrestrial stumbling through 12,500 trees, 200,000 shrubs, and 3.5 acres of flowers would not find beauty by day or terror by night but, as Chaitkin put it, "a scientifically construed quantification of manipulated sentiment," a slide show of Man's Progress in the idiom of the cute. He would find enormously elaborate technology and a wondrous homage to productivity in the form of robot humans, robot-Twain, and robot-Franklin, telling each other about the American Adventure three times an hour, twelve hours a day, seven days a week, without sick leave or demands for overtime. The medium is the message, and Disney World America's subjugation of the world—past, present, and future—into sedate spectacle. The week I was in Epcot a Disneyland was being opened in Tokyo. □

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THE FINE LINE FROM PRITAM & EAMES

An unassuming East Hampton shop deals in one-of-a-kind handcrafted furniture

By Jason Epstein

In a remote corner of East Hampton beside an abandoned steam laundry near the Long Island Rail Road tracks where hardly anyone goes on foot and where drivers seldom stop except to dine at the restaurant housed in the old laundry itself, there sits a small shop, its exterior distinguished by an etched-glass door set into a neatly turned wood frame. Beside the door a painted sign proclaims the firm of Pritam & Eames, sellers of Fine Hand-Crafted Furniture. That this obscure shop should have prospered in a small way since it opened three years ago says more for the ingenuity with which East Hampton seeks out fashion than for the merchandising skills of Bebe and Warren Johnson, the owners. The Johnsons don't advertise. They don't belong to what passes for East Hampton's art world and their attempts at publicity have produced in three years a notice in the magazine *Fine Woodworking,* an article in *The East Hampton Star,* and a review in the Long Island section of the Sunday *New York Times.* Most customers must have found the place by chance. Only now have people begun to talk about it.



Owners Warren and Bebe Johnson. *Below left:* John Dunnigan's "vanity suite" of black lacquer and bubinga wood; the shop at 29 Race Lane; James Krenov's cabinet of lightly spalted American maple, oak, partridge, and cedar of Lebanon.

Originally the Johnsons—her name was Pritam, his middle name is Eames—had planned nothing more ambitious than to sell fine furniture to rich East Hamptonites. At the time he had been working as a film editor. She was with a foundation. Neither of them knew much about furniture or had run a shop before. Moreover, they seem to have had no idea that in East Hampton someone might pick up an antique locally or buy an upholstered chair at the department store on Main Street but would look for an expensive contemporary piece in New York or Europe, probably with the help of a decorator or architect.

What saved the Johnsons from the failure toward which their innocence was pointing them was their fortuitous discovery of the so-called "studio craft movement," a loosely related group of craftsmen who work mostly in wood but also glass and clay and who think of themselves as sculptors. Rejecting the mechanistic sterility of Bauhaus but sharing the Bauhaus idea that useful objects should be designed to the highest artistic standards, these artists-craftsmen came *(Continued on page 26)*







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(Continued from page 24) of age a generation or two ago. Many established their studios on university campuses where they have now spawned a new generation, some of whose members seem to be as gifted technically as the masters themselves and at least as interesting stylistically, perhaps more so, depending on one's preferences. It is the work of these younger craftsmen that saved Pritam & Eames from becoming just another fancy furniture shop and turned it into a cultural occasion of considerable interest.

As a rule Pritam & Eames will show the work of eight or ten of these young furniture makers, men and women mostly in their late 20s or 30s with studios in remote New York State, New England, or California villages, most of whom have trained with such studio craft masters as Wendell Castle, Tage Frid, or James Krenov and who have now begun to come into their own. The Johnsons also show a few pieces by the masters themselves, a music stand, for example, by Wendell Castle, whose work is in the Metropolitan Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, Boston's Museum of Fine Arts, the Renwick, and a dozen or so other American museums; some floor-standing cabinets by James Krenov; and a three-legged stool by Tage Frid, now in his 70s, who helped found the School for American Craftsmen thirty years ago at the Rochester Institute of Technology, which has become a center of studio-craft activity. But it is the younger workers whose pieces dominate the gallery and who probably account for much of the interest that Pritam & Eames has recently generated.

The older studio-craft workers, for all their virtuosity, seem in retrospect to have been limited by the mannerisms typical of their formative decades, by the various modernisms that came and went as the century progressed. But these younger craftsmen belong to a generation without a major style of its own. What they share instead is an almost mandarin obsession with technique and a powerful interest in the history of style. They are fascinated by the technological possibilities provided by new laminating techniques and tools but no less fascinated to learn what an artist makes in an age like this one, an age without its own stylistic clues or assumptions. The question repeatedly asked by the pieces on display at Pritam & Eames and often ingeniously answered is: whether a responsible artist working in an age without a "modernism" of its own can refer to the past without seeming merely chic, nostalgic, or academic—without being neo-this or post-that. For their elders who had come of age earlier in the century, history had been something to overcome. *"Il faut être absolument moderne,"* Rimbaud said a century ago. But for these young artists, history—including the history of Modernism—is all they have. The best of them are learning to transform the past into authentic contemporary terms with dignity and verve.



Detail of Craig Marks's writing table

Craig Marks's writing table is typical of what the Johnsons have been showing. Marks, a 27-year-old Californian, studied geology at Santa Cruz but under the influence of James Krenov became interested in "creating sculptural contemporary furniture based on traditional forms." His writing tables, made of two kinds of rosewood with a thin strip of African ebony inlaid where the top joins the apron, flows vigorously upward on its highly attenuated cabriole legs—the merest echo of the Chippendale curve—the legs culminating in rounded turrets, pitched slightly downward like human shoulders. The slope of these turrets parallels the branching joint, like a living tendon or natural branch where the leg joins the lower edge of the apron, an unobtrusive reference to Art Nouveau's interest in the sculptural representation of living shapes. The upward thrust of the slightly curved leg, made from a darker rosewood than the top, makes the table seem to float above the floor, while the forward tilt of the powerful turrets drives it with equal force in the opposite direction. The fluidity that Marks achieves, as if his table were only briefly at rest, results as much from his graceful workmanship as from his formal vision. He seems to have built this table at a single conceptual and technical stroke in which he combines references to the late eighteenth century and the early twentieth century within a single contemporary thought. Yet the table must have taken hundreds of hours to make. Even its hidden structures—the sides and bottom of the drawer, for example—are finished as if they were meant to be displayed, an embellishment typical of these obsessed craftsmen.

In his devotion to craft, Marks reflects the lessons of his masters. He parts with them in his concentration on traditional forms. Wendell Castle's love seat or double chair, a studio craft masterpiece carved from laminated blocks of cherry as if by wind or sea and now at the Metropolitan, looks like no other seat on earth. In its disdain for precedent, in its pursuit of natural form, it seems almost geological. Where Castle's chair celebrates nature, the works of Marks and many other artists on display at Pritam & Eames contemplate history, often with comparable resourcefulness and power.

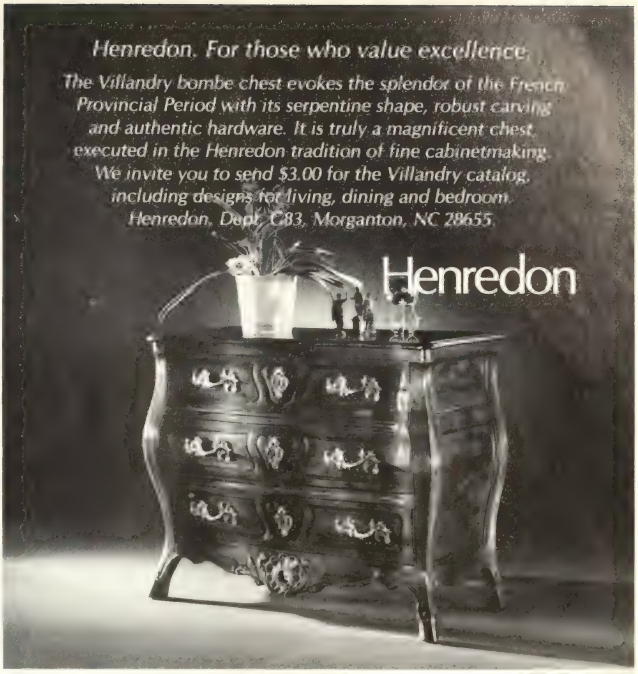
To choose between the masters and their disciples is less a matter of objective criteria than of personal preference. It is also a matter of money. Though Marks's table is hardly inexpensive, the proceeds to the craftsman are probably meager considering the time Marks must have spent building it. The real question for these young artists is not whether their work will be accepted—Marks has already sold five versions of this table—but whether they can afford to go on producing for a market that may be reluctant to pay for a work of art in the form of a table what it would happily pay for something to hang on the wall.

The most elaborate piece currently on display at Pritam & Eames is a din-

ing table by Richard Scott Newman, who studied physics at Cornell and then learned fine woodworking at the Rochester Institute of Technology. He now is on the faculty of Wendell Castle's workshop. Newman's Neoclassical table, its maple and ebony apron punctuated by ormolu heads, carved by Jennifer Beckley, Newman's wife, and cast in silvergilt, extends to ten feet. The cherrywood veneer surface, cut from a single plank, is one-sixteenth-inch thick and planed, not sanded, to a light, clean, opulent finish. When the table is lit from above the effect is theatrical, as if an operatic Napoleon or Washington should be standing beside it.

As a young craftsman, Newman, now in his 30s, "was awestruck and intimidated by the treasures of the Metropolitan Museum of Art," but when he "set out to master the techniques of veneering, inlay, metalwork, and so on," he found himself "unable to integrate decoration" with the modern furniture designs in which he was interested at the time. Now he has "liberated" himself from the restraints of "contemporary design." "Merging traditional designs with a contemporary aesthetic I make furniture that is familiar and inviting yet personally expressive. My concerns are now beauty, elegance, and uncompromised quality." That he can draw on "centuries of experience," he finds "liberating."

In rejecting the discipline of an ever more academic and ritualized avant-garde, the young artists at Pritam & Eames have opened themselves to an extraordinary range of formal possibilities, including, of course, those of Modernism itself. The diverse eclecticism, so vividly transformed by these artists into styles of their own, may be the beginning of a new movement in American design or perhaps only the continuation of an earlier one in which Modernism will hereafter be integrated within the history from which it tried to depart. However one wants to look at it, these young craftsmen seem to be on to something and in their interest in the past may prove to be a vanguard of sorts. It will be worth watching their progress. □



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By Sir John Plumb

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Odile Nouvel. Rizzoli. 151 pages. $45

WALLPAPERS: AN INTERNATIONAL HISTORY AND ILLUSTRATED SURVEY FROM THE VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM
Charles C. Oman and Jean Hamilton;
Abrams, 486 pages, $75

The Lady Margaret Beaufort, the mother of Henry VII, the first Tudor king of England, was a woman of "singular great piety." She founded two colleges at Cambridge University: St. John's College, which only came into being at her death, and mine, Christ's, which she built and lived in for about two months every year. In her rooms, now the Master's Lodge (in which I lived for several years), the earliest piece of wallpaper was discovered—a simple pine cone design, printed on the back of documents thrown away as wastepaper in 1509, the year in which the lodgings were built. The meticulous historians of wallpaper have not noticed the connection between the Princess and the wallpaper. It is in no way surprising that its earliest known use should have been in her house. Apart from her Oratory, there is no contemporary paneling or record of it in her lodgings as there is in the rest of the college built in her time. It is not improbable that they were the first rooms in England to be extensively wallpapered, for the Princess was a passionate devotee of the new art of printing, a great patroness of Caxton and Wynken de Worde, England's first printers. Any new use of print would have fascinated her. But, alas, royal patronage did little to spread or develop the art of wallpaper. For nearly two hundred years, the papers remained primitive and dark, patterned like the paper at Christ's. Probably they were expensive to produce and difficult to hang and technical progress was very, very slow. It was the advent of colored papers in the last decade of the seventeenth century, combined with the growth of a middle-class market, which could not afford expensive tapestries or Spanish leather hangings, that led to the *(Continued on page 30)*



Large draperies from Joseph Dufour, Paris, had a limited following from 1808-1825 when they were used as intermediary panels; they were manufactured from 1800-1850.

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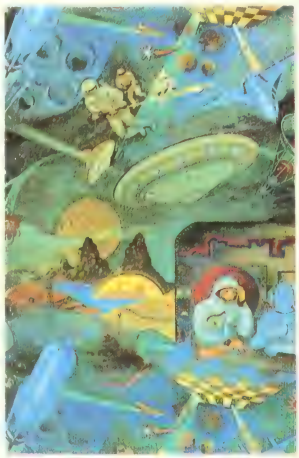
Ceiling paper from the Master's Lodge, Christ's College, Cambridge, c. 1509.

(Continued from page 28) development of wallpapers of singular beauty. The great age of wallpapers was 1750 to 1850, an age of experiment that led to an astonishing variety and in the end to a saturated market. Fortunately, the bulk of the illustrations in these fascinating and informative volumes are drawn from the great period of wallpaper design.

The leaders in the first half of the eighteenth century were the English, particularly the London wallpaper makers who clustered together in Aldermansbury, a district near to the Guildhall in the City of London. By 1702 they were advertising their wares by handbills and by advertisements in the newspapers and had produced the first rolls of wallpaper and improved on the primitive stenciling techniques for color. The somber black and white papers of the two previous centuries died quickly to be replaced by deep, richly colored damasked papers that imitated the Italian velvets and the gilded Spanish leathers with which the seriously rich covered their walls. Wallpapers, however, mainly imitated textiles. And then came the invasion from China.

For centuries the Chinese had been responsive to the luxury markets in Islam and the West. For centuries they had produced beautiful paper and beautiful designs, though for a limited local Chinese market. Rolls of this paper began to reach Europe as captains of British, Dutch, and French vessels realized that they could sell them at a huge profit. They had a delicacy of color, a lightness of design, and a wanton airy quality that delighted a Europe rioting in the rococo. The English wallpaper manufacturers copied them so faithfully that scholars depend on watermarks in the paper or excise stamps to tell which is Chinese and which is English. But the demand was so great that neither England nor China succeeded in flooding the market, although China directed all its energies and skills to make as much as it could. Chinese papers were superbly precise in detail no matter how fanciful the design might be: birds, flowers, trees, shrubs can be exactly identified; the scenes of Chinese life—the children playing games, the scenes of urban life—are still an important addition to knowledge of eighteenth-century China.

The rage for Chinese papers, some of the most beautiful wallpapers ever invented that, today, fetch enormous prices in the auction rooms when old rolls or panels are discovered, began to fade; as demand declined so did quality. Everyone was in the grip of a new decorative fever—Neoclassicism—which suited wallpaper even better than chinoiserie. The discoveries at Pompeii captured the imagination of a world that saw in its own revolutionary movements a return to the virtues of a Roman republic. America acquired a senate and Napoleon was painted in a toga: the marble heads of politicians masqueraded as Cicero or Seneca and the great historical canvases of David Romanized art.



The Cosmonauts, Foucray, French



Garlands and a rustic scene in grisaille, Réveillon, French, c. 1780.

A brilliant entrepreneur called Réveillon, whose technical virtuosity was commensurate with his sales techniques, brought the methods of mass production to the wallpaper industry so that the shopkeeper and the *commis* could turn their parlors into a passing imitation of the splendor of a Pompeian villa. Réveillon's colors were of great brilliance and his papers often contained framed pictures, sometimes in the frieze and often covering most of the paper for a wall. Réveillon saw immediately the advantage of the invention of his friends, the paper-makers Montgolfier. When their balloon rose from Versailles before the astonished

gaze of Louis XVI and his court, it was brilliantly decorated by Réveillon in pinks and golds, setting a trend in hot-air balloons that has lasted to this day. Réveillon, although the most brilliant salesman, had rivals who designed and made papers of the highest quality—some like Zuber of Alsace that lasted for generations and whose firm is still vigorous today. And England, too, never lost a grip on the market.

Wallpaper design took to Romanticism with the same ease as it had accepted Neoclassicism and, as so often happens, technological advance was orchestrated with new artistic horizons. An Englishman invented the Panorama—a roll of paper that was drawn from a cylinder to display the whole sea front of Brighton or the sights of London or Paris. Great panoramic oil paintings that covered huge canvases were already drawing crowds in English cities and the alert paper manufacturers saw their opportunity. All four walls of a room were soon covered in the scenes of Napoleon's battles; or the wonders and beauties of American scenery; or the great waterfalls of the world; or the mysteries of the East, so that wallpaper became a picture: sometimes, of course, these pictures were contained in frames or were surrounded by decorative borders. These panoramic wallpapers had a long-lasting vogue and they are of unsurpassed technical brilliance. After 1860, they declined but they have never quite disappeared. They had a slight and disagreeable descendant in the 1960s when many a cafe and restaurant covered its walls with blown-up photographs. In one or two luxury hotels, even more disagreeable descendants are to be found—badly drawn, badly decorated views of badly imagined exotic climes. Nothing illustrates better the decadence that can infect decorative art.

Over the last century, wallpapers have declined to wall coverings and the taste of a mass market that seems at times to prefer vinyl papers gleaming with gloss, that can be washed or even hosed and never take fire. Colors are usually dull and obvious, patterns unadventurous; certainly mass production methods keep them cheap; even the physical incompetent, like myself, can hang them easily enough. Against this tidal wave of trash a few firms struggled successfully in the late nineteenth century—William Morris, Walter Crane, Henry Cole produced papers of such artistic merit, drawing powerfully on tradition, and their papers are still in print, still sought by the cognoscenti. A few modern manufacturers experiment. Nobilis in France and Sanderson in England have had a wider success than most. There have been adventurous papers—the French even produced a cosmonauts paper! Enterprising American manufacturers have achieved the most successful revival of quality. Excellent exhibitions, ardent societies, international conventions have, however, not really achieved a true revival of wallpaper as a mass decorative art. Only nursery papers—some like "Paddington Bear" utterly delightful—have the imaginative vigor, the visual delights of the wallpapers of old, and a mass sale to support them.

And yet tens of thousands of acres of wallpaper are used every year—possibly millions. From that found in luxury hotels to the humblest cottage, it is mainly dull and uniform in color: if patterned, so lightly, it cannot be seen or so crudely that it hurts the eye. These splendidly illustrated books that display over and over again the traditional decorative effects that wallpaper can achieve should be sent to all of our leading decorative artists. And they should be hurled like missiles into the offices of the mass producers. Walls should be life-enhancing, giving the illusion of space and pleasure, even adventure or the heroic life, but most of ours are as dull as prisons or as monotonous as a steppe. An art so universal in its application should not be in the hands of a few stylish decorators, a few unregarded artists, or a few small firms. And what a pity it is that the few manufacturers of skill and taste who do cater for the mass market should largely depend on designs or pastiches of those designs now a century old. ▮



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BUTTONING UP COMFORT

Another detail of our flirtation with the nineteenth century

By Nancy Richardson

The story of the princess and the pea gives us an idea of how much more luxurious are our modern notions of comfort than even the aristocratic ones of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Before 1850, firm and soft bedding alike was achieved by piling layers of thinly padded mattresses on top of each other. Inside the mattresses, the down or horsehair filler migrated from end to end, creating a standard of lumps and pockets. Made up, the bed might have looked either magnificent or charming, according to its hangings and shape. But comfortable, in our terms, it was not. The same was true of chairs. At the time of Louis XV, the French court sometimes sat on upholstered chairs with buttoned-seat cushions that were intended to make the seat softer and the stuffing more stationary. But it wasn't until the nineteenth century, when the middle class began to influence fashions at court for the first time, that furniture came to be designed for comfort as well as line. The device that made this possible was the spring, which began to appear in new forms in the middle of the nineteenth century. A steel spring made a hoop skirt and a bustle voluminous, light, and collapsible. A coiled spring made upholstery and mattresses comfortable at last. With the spring came a deeply set button-tufting that extended from the chair seat to its arms and to a newly fashionable balloon back. For the first time, chairs became more important for upholstery and voluptuous contours than for a wooden frame.

Much is made of the parallel between fashion in dresses and fashion in decoration in the 1860s and '70s, and certainly the new upholstery related more to dressmaking than to furniture design. Franz Xaver Winterhalter caught the look in his portrait of the Empress Eugénie and her ladies-in-waiting—lace and skirts frothing at their feet, alabaster shoulders exposed. The ladies were sitting in the center of a drawing room on a cakelike tufted confection called a pouf. The ladies were triply indebted—big springs swelled their skirts, tiny ones engineered their corsets, and sofa springs supported the whole affair. Both ladies and furniture were covered in Lyons silk in vivid colors and further embellished with tassles and fringe.



One of a set of ten Napoleon III dining chairs still covered in the original red material. From Newel Art Galleries, New York, which carries a large selection of eccentric tufted furniture.

In France, especially, the new comfort of the tufted spring seat gave rise to chair forms of great fantasy. They followed conventions of romance, conversation, gossip, and family life. A *vis à vis, confident,* or *dos à dos* (back to back) was made for two, an *indiscret* for three. Armchairs were both high and low, big and small. In buttoned silk and velvet, these seats had a very feminine look about them; done in tufted leather and put in a smoking room, they seemed masculine.

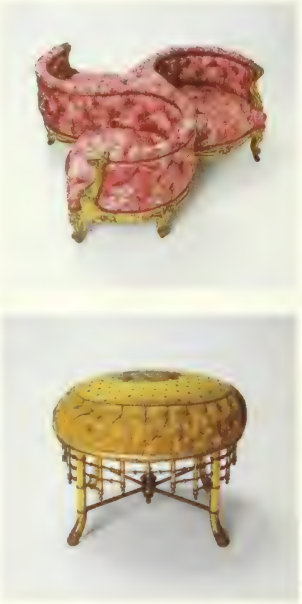
In addition to comfort, these curvaceous new seats gave a room an atmosphere of intimacy. This was something much sought after at the end of the eighteenth century, but the furniture that was designed to satisfy a desire for charming domesticity remained high-style, disciplined, and in harmony with the structure of eighteenth-century rooms. By the middle of the nineteenth century, eighteenth-century chairs were considered neither cozy nor comfortable enough. Wholly upholstered modern chairs began to move into most *(Continued on page 36)*



(Continued from page 32) nineteenth-century sitting rooms. These tufted-buttoned chairs were irreverent not only in their shape but also in their placement in the room; they sidled in irrespective of the architecture. What gave these rooms some sense of order was a single background color such as red, green, or violet. Accents for these monochromatic schemes were chairs covered in chintz flowers, mildly ridiculous in both their shape and their upholstery. Alternating bands of solid and patterned materials were appliquéd onto the solid velvet or damask that covered the whole. The striped bands broke up the monotony of one-color room schemes in the same way as patterned cushions do on solid-colored sofas.

Mario Praz, who seemed to have an amused affection for these seats as they occurred in the 1850s and '60s, could not resist telling us in *An Illustrated History of Interior Decoration* (Thames and Hudson, 1982) that the tufted style could be described as a deification of the navel and the belly, "that most bourgeois part of our anatomy." Even in the period, people had perceived the creaturelike qualities of their upholstered furniture. In a short story by Guy de Maupassant, Praz finds expression for the nightmarish feeling too much buttoned and overstuffed furniture could create in a room: "Suddenly, in the doorway, I saw an armchair, the big armchair I read in, which went out, swaying. It went off into the garden. Other chairs followed it, the armchairs of my living room, then the low divans which dragged themselves along like crocodiles on their short legs, then all my chairs, which bounded like goats, and the footstools which sprung like rabbits."

Compiègne, the Tuileries, and Saint-Cloud—French royal palaces used by Napoleon III—and Rothschild houses like Ferrières gave this new reign of upholstery a glamour that wafted all over the world. Jean Feray, Inspecteur Principal des Monuments Historiques in Paris, explains that both the court and the Rothschilds had a lot of eighteenth-century furniture that in the 1850s was upholstered in the new way. "The Empress Eugénie collected everything she could find that belonged to Marie Antoinette, had it fitted with tufted spring seats and mounted on little wheels. She mixed new tufted furniture with the most beautiful Louis XVI furniture made. When the fabric was worn out on the new chairs they were often thrown away or broken up. The fashion for deeply tufted seating was so pervasive that it became the standard in railway carriages and carries over today on expensive automobile seats. We continue the nineteenth-century habit of mixing antiques with upholstered furniture, though our upholstered chairs and sofas have recently become bulky and shapeless. Decorators seem to have forgotten that tufting will create comfortable seats without bulk and also permit the making of fanciful shapes."



Top: An *indiscret* in the swirling S-shape of the rococo revival. *Above:* A *faux* bamboo stool. Both from Musée des Arts Decoratifs, Paris.

Many contemporary decorators look back to the reign of the tufted seat in search of a look that can be high-style without being cold and pompous. Because Queen Victoria, Napoleon III, and Eugènie, as well as the Rothschilds, brought the fashion to great houses and palaces, it's not surprising to find in this furniture a curious mixture of both aristocratic and bourgeois qualities. Robert Denning and Vincent Fourcade were the first in this country to use a Napoleon III background as a setting for paintings and objects. They seemed to have understood the combination of richness and domesticity so well that a few years ago *Vogue* could characterize their style only as "cozy grand," a seeming contradiction in terms.

Few decorators, however, embrace everything that goes along with the tufted seat. Mark Hampton recently redid his own bedroom using only nineteenth-century tufted furniture, which he covered in a pale blue-gray silk and placed against walls covered in a Chinese wallpaper. What he wanted was the whimsical silhouette of the chairs without period materials and trim. Hervé Aaron, who last year arranged an exhibition of American nineteenth-century furniture and objects for his family's gallery, Didier Aaron in New York, likes, among other things in the period, the sculptural quality of the Herter Bros. furniture made in New York in the 1870s. In order to show off the wood and the carving, he used tufted white muslin to cover the upholstered part of the chair and put them in rooms with giant architectural drawings framed in mahogany.

A few dealers like Jean-Paul Beaujard buy nineteenth-century tufted chairs at auction and have the most amusing models copied by an upholsterer. Interestingly, reproductions of upholstered pieces seem to offend no one, while they supply what we all want from the nineteenth-century buttoned seat—the funny shape and the comfort. □



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THE QUEEN OF THE KILN

Praise from Bloomsbury for a master potter of the Modern Movement

By Quentin Bell

"And even the ranks of Tuscany could scarce forbear to cheer"

As children we knew that quotation well, but it is so long since I was a child that a word of explanation may be needed. The details don't matter; it is sufficient to say that the "ranks of Tuscany" were so impressed by an adversary who, with two friends, was giving them a fearful hiding that they could not repress their admiration. I like to suppose that they did not, in fact, "forbear" and that there was a loud, spontaneous, and magnanimous demonstration of enthusiasm. It would make one think so much better of humanity, and no cheering is so cheering as the cheering of an enemy. Not, let me hasten to add, that one can in any personal way regard so talented, so modest, and so self-effacing a character as Lucie Rie as "an enemy"; but undeniably I follow another camp, and it is very possible that among Lucie Rie's admirers—and in England they are numerous—there might be some who would raise an eyebrow and wonder how I, holding the opinions that I do hold, dare lay a bouquet at her feet. And yet I do, not for the first time, either. In the 1950s, when the name of Lucie Rie was much less well known than it is now, she had an exhibition with her friend and sometime assistant, Hans Coper. I cannot find the number of *The Listener* in which I praised that exhibition, but I am sure that I was complimentary, for I can remember how much I liked it. And yet today, when she has I suppose become the "grand old lady of British pottery," much celebrated as a miracle of craftsmanship, taste, and refinement, her name is one with which to conjure, I found myself writing (it was but a few months ago) to complain that our pottery is too quiet, too tasteful, too refined, and although I certainly did not include Lucie Rie in my general condemnation, I suppose that it is fair to say that I do look rather inconsistent.

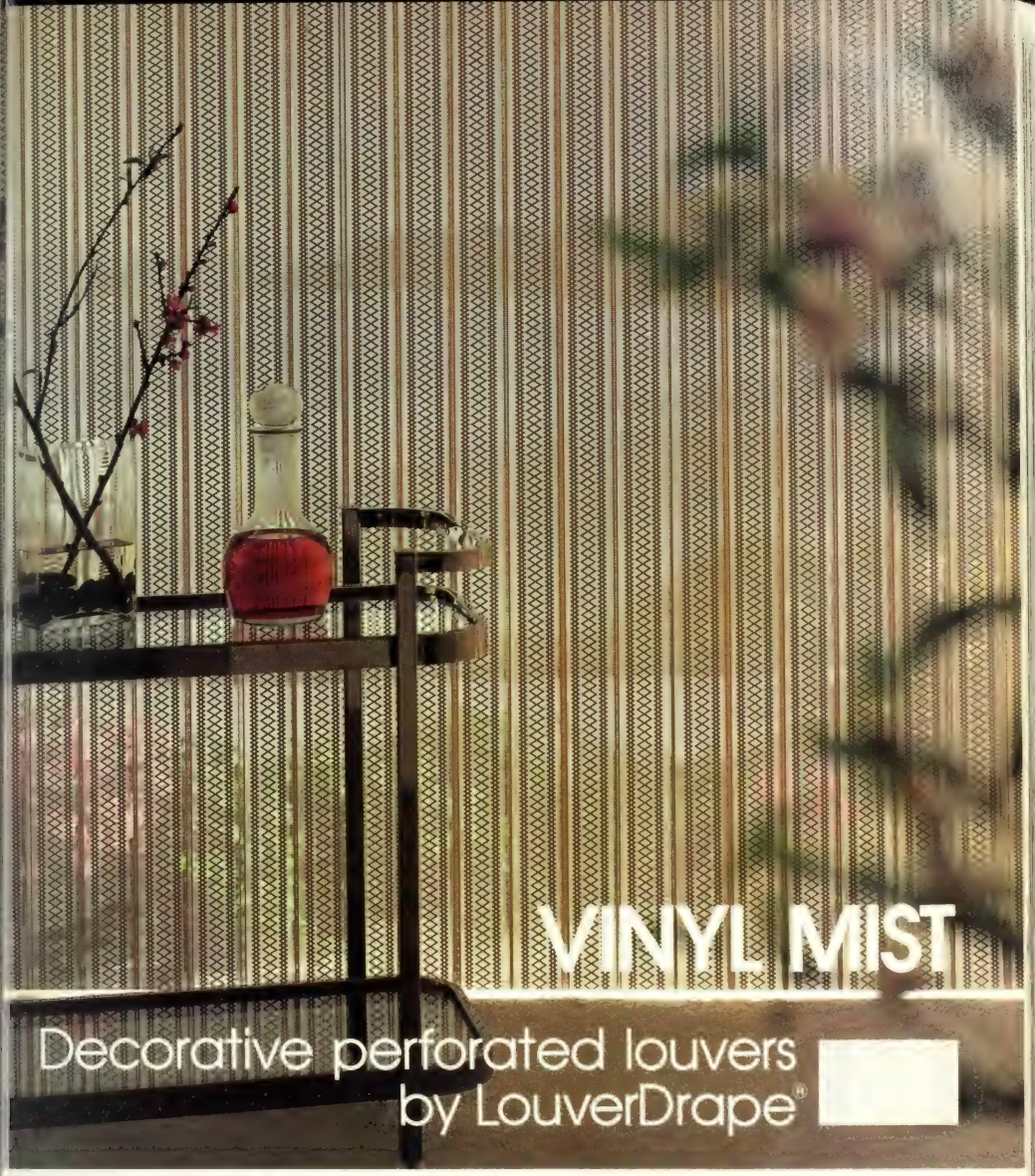




Above: Lucie Rie in her London studio surrounded by work. *Below:* Some of her well-known bottle-like pots in light hues.

Whether I am consistent or inconsistent need worry no one save myself; it matters only that my praise does not come from a blind partisan. For the rest, let me try as best I may to say something truthful about the work of Lucie Rie.

There was a time when she produced teacups, teapots, and other purely domestic ware using an earthenware body; but nowadays she devotes herself almost entirely to individual pieces that are either porcelain or stoneware. In this genre there are two shapes that have always fascinated her. There is a tall, slender "bottle" that frequently spreads out to form a very wide lip supported by a very thin neck; the belly of the "bottle" is of moderate rotundity and *(Continued on page 40)*



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It is very possible that among Lucie Rie's admirers—and in this country they are numerous—there might be some who would raise an eyebrow and wonder how I, holding the opinions that I do hold, dare lay a bouquet at her feet

(Continued from page 38) it stands upon a reasonably solid foot. The other shape (which I like best) is conical, the cone descending to a perilously tiny base. Either way, the piece will look as thin as a railway ticket and will be clothed, heaven knows how, with a combination of metals, slips, and glazes applied with a brush layer upon layer to produce an astonishing variety of beautiful surface textures. These surfaces, which for all their apparent fragility never bear a sharp edge, will be adorned either with no decoration or with some very slight and very decisive pattern consisting, perhaps, of a few lines.

"The whole thing is very carefully planned": that might seem a very reasonable account of any of her works, but I suspect that it would not be true. I do not believe that her pots are 'thought out' or in any way calculated. I think of them as arising from what you might call a tactile decision: the clay upon the wheel revolves between her hands and her hands determine the result. This may be quite wrong but they do give the impression of having "happened" without any pondering or conscious design. It is one of the mysteries of pottery that the potter may, on occasion, find a satisfactory shape without ever standing back to look at it. If this be the case, then that would be one reason why it would be so difficult to make a convincing fake of a work by Lucie Rie, as has recently been done with the work of another very celebrated British potter. One might write down all the formulas necessary for making a Lucie Rie, and a very skillful workman might follow those instructions to the letter; but the really valuable qualities in her work are of a kind that cannot be described in words, qualities that result from the exercise of a very fine sensibility. The trouble is that whether we be artists or purchasers we tend to imagine that we also have as fine a sensibility as hers, so that the potter who is beguiled by Lucie Rie's splendid simplicities, and is in no moral sense a faker, still makes things that are in the artistic sense fraudulent and the purchaser buys





Above: Quentin Bell in his studio in Sussex. *Below:* Some of his earthenware done in the Bloomsbury style.

them. It is so easy, when so much depends upon almost imperceptible niceties of feeling, to suppose excellencies where none in fact exist. This is a common danger that all collectors must face, but it becomes exceptionally acute in a kind of work that depends so largely upon an apparent simplicity. In Great Britain, where the pursuit of refinement and quiet good taste may be accounted one of the national vices, an artist as gifted as Lucie Rie will become deservedly popular, but will at the same time, quite unconsciously, offer a trap to the unwary. It must be said, however, that in this respect she brought us nothing new. For a very long time we have been offered an even more dangerous mixture of Far Eastern sobriety and sober folksy reticence, which, at its best, achieved a kind of honest bucolic strength but which, far too often, resulted in work that was simply tedious. Lucie Rie flirted with that school, a school that was taught by some very persuasive masters. Happily she broke with it and returned to a personal variant of her native style.

In this connection it must be said that, like so many of our greatest craftsmen, she is a refugee from the European mainland and has been saved from some of the worst temptations that beset the British potter by a Viennese insistence upon gaiety, luxury, and elegance. She is capable indeed of something very like frivolity, a much-needed element in our native style, and one finds again and again in her work felicities of texture and of color that are urban and elegant and charming and also, it should be said, highly appropriate to porcelain.

Indeed it is porcelain that brings out the best in her; it belongs to the tradition from which she comes, not, or at all events not at all immediately, from the pretty Rococo nonsense of Dresden (which in our time has been too easily despised), but from the late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century ceramics of her native city. For although she broke away, as was only



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SHERRILL

(Continued from page 42) butter, eggs, flour, carrots, celery, prosciutto, onions, the duck. I'd studied the recipe, talked to my sister, but confronted with the dish piece by piece I thought it looked like a daunting amount of work. Still, we would talk while we worked, wouldn't we, and how much work could a lasagne be for four veterans of Julia Child?

We didn't talk very much at all. The Cuisinart, which Kathy and I needed for the sauce and *balsamella,* fractured conversation along with carrots and cheese. Joel was making the pasta on a very spiffy-looking pasta machine imported from Italy, which filled the kitchen with the sounds of the IRT on a bad morning. The sauces took a few hours of chopping, cooking, and stirring; our communication consisted of things like, "Do you think Giuliano really means *finely* chopped?" and, "This smells great!"

The pasta dough required all our participation, and we mixed and kneaded, then thinned it as thin as the machine could make it. Now it had to rest before the next step. Yards of yellow dough in various stages of thinness lay across the worktable on every cotton towel Kathy had. As at the dentist, when the anticipation of pain and the sound of the drill lull me into sleep, I fell into an almost meditative state. The knowledge of the hundreds of small steps still to go and the worry that I was leading my friends on a wild goose (duck) chase fell away. I remembered how, in childhood, I loved to sit and watch my mother make thin pancakes for blintzes. Each step was so important—the very thin batter hitting the greased cast-iron pan with just the right sound, then cooking evenly for just so long, and then the final dramatic moment when my mother picked up the heavy pan, carried it over to the kitchen table, which was covered with cotton towels, and flipped over the pan, revealing a perfect smooth crêpe or a failure. I ate the few failures. Looking now at the broad strips of pasta resting on Kathy's worktable, I wondered that human beings have lavished so much ingenuity and intelligence on devising different things to do with dough. Joel was patiently and carefully bringing another yard of pasta through the machine and laying the product on the last bit of open space. I looked at the book: we had to cut the pasta into squares, boil it briefly, cool it in ice water, and set it down for another nap. I wanted a nap myself; this seemed like a very strange way to be spending an afternoon. But in losing my taste for the complications and refinements of the recipe, I risked losing track of much more. I recalled a Zen anecdote of a master and a disciple who are eating melon together. The master asks, "Tell me, where does all this sweetness come from?" The disciple replies, "Why, it's the product of cause and effect." But the master disagrees, as vehemently as most Zen masters: "Bah! From the very 'where' itself, that's where." I was in danger of losing the where of Duck Lasagne.

About five hours into the cooking, the house was quiet again and filled with the rich smoky smell of the duck sauce. The children and Glenn arrived home from their afternoon out of our way, and seven-year-old Kate surveyed the scene.

"Can I have some?" she asked.

"This isn't a dish for children," Kathy answered. "We're going to take it out to dinner."

"Well, why are you working so hard on it," Kate said a moment later, "if you're just going to eat it?"

The lasagne was to be the main course. Our host provided the supporting food, and when we arrived, we saw the table set with polished silver and gleaming white china. Roses from his garden were arranged in glass vases all through the house. The place appeared properly festive for our creation, I thought. I was exhausted, however, and preoccupied with the lasagne. Would it be good? Was there enough *balsamella?* Giuliano knows best, I reminded myself. I found it hard to concentrate on talking to the other guests. All I could think of was the lasagne, which was now baking, now resting, now, at last, served.

It was wonderful. I think, in fact, that it was the best thing I've ever eaten. The smoky strong flavor of the duck and prosciutto with the clean vegetable sauce, the sweetness of the *balsamella,* the softness of the cheese and noodles—I was almost too hungry for it. Small portions were served and small seconds followed. Then it was over, gone as if it hadn't ever been there, leaving me behind. Glenn and Kathy were taking it in stride, talking as the others were, about children's camps and schools, an opera to be performed next season. Joel, veteran of the pasta, was making idle conversation with the guest of honor about touch football, which she'd recently taken up. I should have been given a duck medal, I thought, some mark to acknowledge my alienation from ordinary life. When the evening ended, I was almost glad.

I expected too much, I know. It was only food. The other dinner guests could never really appreciate how long we spent on the lasagne. Yet it wasn't the hours or the work I regretted, but that the culmination came and went so much more quickly than the build-up. The afternoon ruined me for the evening. It was as if the only proper conversation that night would have been lasagne, a topic of small interest to most people. I finally understood that the problem wasn't with the other guests—ingrates—or the noise of the Cuisinart and the pasta machine—mere details. The problem was with my expectations. I wanted the soft and swell lasagne to be a marble monument to friendship and to the special occasion. I wanted the most transitory of human creations to be permanent, wished for a balance between preparation and execution that comes rarely. Each process must be appreciated for itself or not at all. And one must derive satisfaction from the process, not only from the product.

Some things you cherish because they pass so quickly, like lilacs and Duck Lasagne. Your ability to let such pleasures go without regret is the measure of your real appetite for life. The memory of the Duck Lasagne has survived the quick demise of the real thing, and the dinner guests still recall it fondly—though, sad to say, not often enough for me. □

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SHADYSIDE

An oasis carved out of Houston's bald prairie

By Christopher Gray

You can drive right by it on South Main Street between downtown Houston and Rice University and never wonder what's behind the long, blank, brick wall. Don't bother asking even native Houstonians about it—most don't know where it is, if they've heard of it at all. In fact, it is probably easier to be born there than to find it, and that's just fine with the residents of Shadyside, who consider it the sterling silver counterpoint to the mere gold plate of Houston's more widely known River Oaks section.

Shadyside is just two short, intersecting streets, Remington and Longfellow, named after the favorite painter and poet of Joseph S. Cullinan, who established the eighteen-lot enclave in 1916 "for a few congenial friends and neighbors." Cullinan, who had founded Texaco in 1903, hired landscape architect George Kessler (fresh from work on the Country Club District in Kansas City) to lay out a tiny residential park in what was then open country, just opposite Rice University. To design his own Tudor house, he called on James P. Jamieson, eminent by that time for his palaces on St. Louis's private streets. Cullinan researched the private street quite thoroughly, but his fortune permitted him to exceed the conventional model—his street was not just private, but personal as well.

"Everyone I can recall was either a business or social acquaintance of my father," says one of the two Cullinan children who still occupy their own houses in Shadyside. "There was nothing here but bald prairie, no trees, just a dirt road. It was too far out; people thought my father was crazy to move out here." Crazy or not, all but one of Cullinan's lots sold within six weeks after they were first available in 1919, going to people like Judge William Moore, Cullinan's legal advisor; R. Lee Blaffer and Harry C. Wiess, successive presidents of Humble Oil; William S. Farish, president of Humble and then Standard Oil; as well as other top Houston names: Neuhaus (investments), Crotty (oil), Lykes (shipping), Womack (cotton), and others. In moving to Shadyside, they were following the general southwesterly migration of Houston's residential center, more or less along the great diagonal of South Main Street. Some of the early Shadyside residents came from large public boulevards like Montrose Avenue, others from enclaves like Courtlandt Place, a St. Louis–style private street with gates and a central mall.

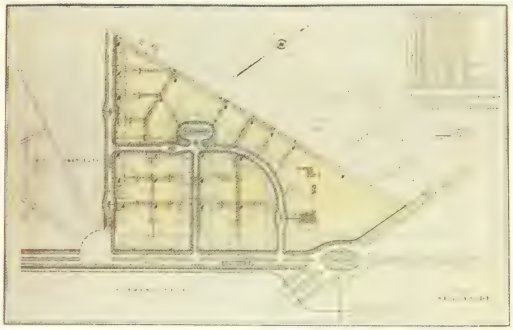
Most house lots are irregular, and the Remington/Longfellow crossing is the natural center, where all of Shadyside comes together and from which all of Texas seems to spread out: the utter flatness, the infinite summer heat and the leafy oaks that reduce it, the tropical lawns of St. Augustine and lush beds of monkey grass contrasting with Houston's underlying prairie character. "Even though Main Street is right over there, it's like being a hundred miles from Houston," says Mrs. Don Quast, who occupies the old Neuhaus residence, the showpiece house and garden in the area. "Once you turn in from Main Street, there's something refreshing, just driving in." This sense of protected boundaries is no accident and has been a constant theme in Houston real-estate development since the 1890s. In a city where the only





Left: One of the Cullinan daughters' houses, on Longfellow Lane.
Right: The old Neuhaus house has Shadyside's finest plantings.

height limit on buildings is set by the F.A.A., private controls have always been key, and the maintenance (or breaking) of property covenants is to cocktail conversation in Houston what co-op prices are in New York. Cullinan decided to build Shadyside only after the covenants in another planned development left him disappointed, and civic leader Will Hogg built the River Oaks section in the 1920s only after a dispute with Cullinan over title to a lot in Shadyside.



The original ground plan of Shadyside, 1918

Stephen Fox, the historian of Shadyside, has remarked that it went beyond the old private-street model to a more complex, picturesque layout. This in turn was a prelude to the planning of the larger country club districts of the 1920s, and Shadyside occupies a unique middle position in American residential planning. Cullinan's luxury in creating his private preserve was the ability to draw from a group with a remarkable homogeneity of tastes and goals, so sophisticated restrictions were not considered necessary. He even refrained from the usual gates—the hallmark of private-street developments—an omission that the Trustees of Shadyside have only this year decided to correct. The houses were planned individually, but complement rather than compete with each other, in unassuming Mediterranean and English styles. Early works include designs by out-of-towners like Jamieson and New Yorker Harrie T. Lindeberg, but native designers soon took over, and the lots filled up with houses by Briscoe, Watkin, and Staub. Directness and simplicity are the key, and there is none of the newer pretentious Colonial and French Provincial of the television show *Dallas*, for instance, which Shadyside residents suspect is peopled by River Oaks residents.

Pretentious or not, River Oaks, in its sheer size, did change the structure of Houston in a *(Continued on page 50)*

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(Continued from page 47) way that no private kingdom like Shadyside ever could. Suddenly the whole city just shifted west, where the social center of gravity—the clubs, the schools, the churches—remains to this day. Joseph Hudson, a Blaffer descendant, has just bought the old Womack house and recalls the changing position of the city's southern end: "I used to come here a lot to visit my grandmother. It's funny—Shadyside was the finest place to live for years, and then, somehow, so many people moved to River Oaks, and the city grew up toward that area, and then everybody started moving out to Memorial [much farther west]. But later the traffic got bad, and people started focusing on old houses again, and that's changed the whole picture of where to live in Houston."

By the 1940s, the Shadyside district was surrounded by nonresidential, albeit polite, uses: the old Warwick Hotel, Rice University, the expanding Medical Center (now Houston's major industry), the Museum of Fine Arts, and Hermann Park. Although there was no obvious decline, likewise there was no advance, and through all this Shadyside's occupancy changed very slowly. "I do *not* like to move," says one resident, and the typical householder has been there forty years or longer. A Cullinan daughter charts the change: "At first there were forty young people, you know, ten or fifteen years old, but now, well, there are at least four widows." And a friend says, "We've always had swimming parties in my pool, but it's down to just a few now; our ranks are thinning, you know. Mrs. Wray doesn't swim, and Mrs. Cravens doesn't like cold water and I don't like hot water, so I swim in the morning and she swims in the afternoon—it's not much of a party anymore."

Now Shadyside is at a turning point. Although some younger people are moving in, most of the houses have changed hands only once, if at all, and the enclave is just nearing the end of its second generation. The third, it is widely suspected, will be given over to those medical professionals who work in the nearby Medical Center. Dr. Antonio Moure, who built the only modern house in Shadyside, talks about the irrefutable logic of Shadyside for a doctor. "We were living in the suburbs, Sharpstown, right next to a golf course. We had thought we'd play golf every day, but then we realized we weren't getting home until eight every night, much less playing golf, and we decided to move in nearer our offices. [His wife, Jean, is a doctor too.] It's interesting—I had driven down South Main Street for years but we just hadn't heard of Shadyside. We were the first doctors in here; someday it will be one hundred percent doctors."

Shadyside today is a bit cautious, guarded: the transition from second to third generation does not promise to be as effortless as that from first to second. Cullinan's house was demolished in 1972, after an unsuccessful attempt to break the single-family residence restrictions, and two of the more recent owners have succumbed to tall iron fences that are far better at disrupting the quietude of the enclave than at keeping out any intruders. And yet Shadyside is more beautiful now than it ever was. The oaks have matured, the houses have the patina of Houston's finest era of homebuilding, and the city's relentless commercial vigor makes Shadyside seem all the more like an oasis of repose, J. S. Cullinan's green jewel set down in the middle of the bald prairie, still verdant. □

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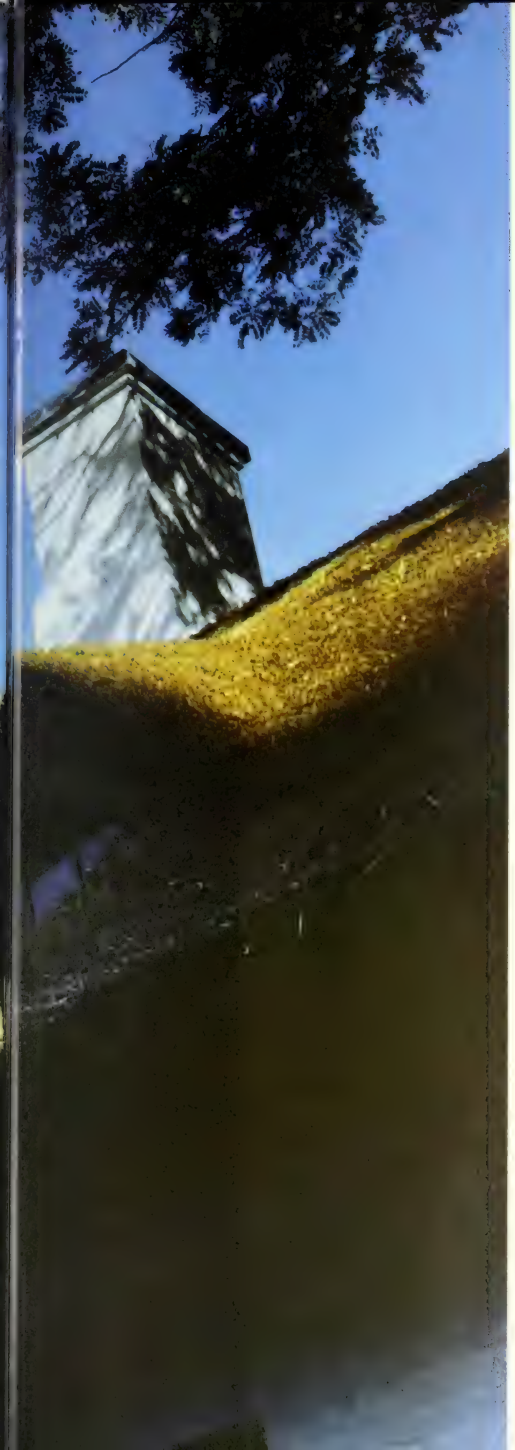


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A NORTHERN IDYLL

BY JAMES WINTHROPE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARIE HOLSTEIN

The charming country palace of Liselund is Denmark's most inspired interpretation of late-eighteenth-century Neoclassic style. Baron Antoine de la Calmette employed the royal architect and furniture designer to create his house, but both the garden and house truly express the romantic ideals of the Baron and his wife, Elisabeth de la Calmette

The thatched roof and traditional Danish bell-tower of Liselund's *petit château* formed the focal point of the de la Calmettes's sweeping romantic garden



Right: Delicate ornate plaster carvings—obviously inspired by Wedgwood—ornament pastel walls of the Monkey Room. Trellis wainscoting looks like bamboo but actually has been painted on, while the flowers and leaves that decorate mirrors and console were carved of natural birch. *Above:* Peristyle of simple wooden columns around dining-room wing.

They personified Rousseauan ideals. Their demeanor, thought, and tastes reflected the romantic individualism and purity that Jean-Jacques Rousseau contended was the innate quality of all human beings. Happily, Baron Antoine and Baroness Elisabeth de la Calmette enjoyed a station in life that gave them the liberty to pursue these romantic ideals. Well-educated, widely traveled, and extremely talented, the de la Calmettes epitomized the modern noble family in eighteenth-century Denmark.

From their city palace in Copenhagen, the de la Calmettes directed glittering social gatherings that included the Danish royals, foreign artists, and the diplomatic corps. Baron Antoine's father, Bosc, had left his ambassadorship in Lisbon to become permanent envoy of the House of Orange to the Danish throne. De la Calmette's interests in things scientific and the family's intimacy with the cultural currents of the Continent made the



Dutch ambassador and his son the rage of the academic and social salons of Scandinavia. The titles bestowed upon Antoine indicate the favored position the de la Calmettes held at court. Fashioned a "King's Gentleman of the Bedchamber" very early in life, upon his majority Antoine was elevated to a barony by the Danish monarch.

Baron Antoine's marriage to Anna Catherine Elisabeth Iselin, called Lisa, the prize of Copenhagen society, solidified the Dutch family's position in Denmark. Despite the political expediency of their marriage, Antoine and Lisa de la Calmette lived together for 25 years marked only by affection and mutual respect. Both shared a deep interest in French culture and the movements of the times. They fostered these interests during repeated trips to the Continent. Their salon in Copenhagen was considered the city's most cultivated and innovative.

Shortly after their marriage the de la Calmettes acquired a small property called Sømarkegaard on Møn Island. Situated on dramatic chalk cliffs and covered with thick beech forest, the property seemed to the de la Calmettes the perfect setting for a new garden in the romantic style. The Baron began his garden by changing its name to Liselund—"Lisa's Wood." He then drew up plans for an English park that would give physical form to the philosophical principles the couple espoused. To complement their garden scheme, the de la Calmettes built a small *palais* at Liselund. The architecture of the palace displays the Baron and Baroness's intensely personal interpretation of the Neoclassic idiom.

Before construction began on the palace, Baron Antoine spent eight years creating the English park that forms the setting for the small summer retreat. First, the Baron cleared the center of the dell at the heart of his property. He then had a number of drainage ditches widened and landscaped to resemble a winding river. At critical points the river widens to accommodate small islands with romantic French names. Flocks of wildfowl were settled on the islands. A cleft in the hills on the north side of the gardens was made into a wild chasm complete with waterfall and hermit's hut. The surrounding hills retained their stands of beech and elm as a contrast for the exotic trees the Baron planted within the dell.

In the approved English fashion the Baron had follies constructed to accent the topographical features of the garden. At the crown of a gentle rise, a small Chinese pagoda, complete with lacquered latticework tower, served as the de la Calmettes' tea parlor. A rugged Norwegian mountain cabin marks the beginning of the forest paths leading down the white chalk cliffs to the beach. A Gothic ruin, placed by the chasm, was meant to jar the sensibilities of visitors with a reminder of human mortality. More



Baroness Lisa insisted upon the thatched roof to emphasize the rusticity of the site. Her husband, Baron Antoine, dredged and widened existing drainage ditches to create the winding river. Their daughter-in-law installed flocks of white fowl on the park's large central island.







The dining room is a masterpiece of trompe l'oeil painting. The chairs are painted, though they look carved, with pastel tendrils and ropelike curves. The classical architectural details are also illusions. The *faux marbre* panels and gray moldings outlining the windows and mirrors are painted. The black-and-white-checked pine wood floor is also painted to look like marble. The console tables double as serving boards.

than just a pleasure garden, Liselund was planned to provoke thought and emotions. A nostalgic gardener's cottage is tucked partially into another hillside, its façade wrapped in oak logs and roof thatched to resemble a Swiss chalet. The two guest rooms in the cottage, fitted under the high-pitched roof, are reached by a foot bridge jutting out from the hill.

Exercising the full range of their imaginations and talents as well as considerable portions of their fortune, the de la Calmettes created what their contemporaries considered Denmark's most beautiful garden, "in the new style." Still, eight years after its opening Liselund lacked a residence. Following a day of picnicking and botanizing, the de la Calmettes, their guests and staff were obliged to return to the family seat, Marienborg, twelve miles away. To remedy this, Baron Antoine began construction of the *palais* at Liselund in 1792.

This summer palace proved to be the de la Calmettes' most important contribution to Denmark's cultural heritage. The palace gives a rare physical expression to the cosmopolitan tastes of eighteenth-century aristocrats. The daring combination of previously incompatible styles at Liselund created a new style, which has inspired architects and designers even into this century. Baron Antoine contracted court architect Andreas Kirkerup, a studied Classicist, to produce the working drawings for the palace. Using the Baron's sketches, done in France, as a guide, Kirkerup envisioned the de la Calmettes' palace as a true Greek temple. Kirkerup's first set of drawings were returned by the Baron with copious notes on the necessity of creating innovations on Classical themes and using artistic intuition for the palace design. The de la Calmettes demanded that the architect accent the rusticity of the site. Persistently returning drawings and making changes to Kirkerup's plans, the Baroness, in final exasperation, demanded that he put a thatched roof on the palace as an assurance of rusticity.

Eventually, Kirkerup succeeded in incorporating rusticity and the thatched roof into a classic mold. The charming result of his labor and the de la Calmettes' demands used classic elements to accent traditional architectural forms. The dining-room wing, for example, is guarded by a simple peristyle of wooden columns. Elaborate capitals were rejected here in favor of unadorned wooden abacuses. The front façade's prostyled portico is carried by four similarly treated columns. These frame the entrance's three French doors, which are emphasized by bold rustications. The flanking windows of this façade are festooned with plaster garlands of flowers, a device carried through the interior decorations.

The furnishings of the palace are the design of J. C. Lillie, controller of the Royal Furniture Stores. His most famous creations are the oval mirrors that decorate many of the major rooms in the palace. Like most of the furniture at Liselund, the carved *(Text continued on page 159)*



Fully carved palm trees frame the painted panels and provide a perch for the lifesize monkey painted on pier glass. Two urns—one, seen here, a functional heating oven, the other a matching pendant of wood and clever painting—balance the room.







Opposite: The Baron's loving monument to his Baroness: a marble relief of two of the three Graces. *Above*: Hans Christian Andersen once stayed in a guest room in the chalet-like gardener's cottage — one of the architectural follies created by the Baron.

CLARITY OF ART AND PLACE

Italian architects Patrizio Romano Paris and Patrizia Pietrogrande wed a Rome apartment to its art collection

BY KEN SILVER

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CARLA DE BENEDETTI



The Casagrandes' entry hall is an elegant setting for the collection of conceptual and minimal art. The architects pierced the wall that divides the two rooms, creating niches—one holds a marble Roman torso—and giving the wall a sculptural quality of its own. Over the Roman sarcophagus in the foyer is a wall drawing that Sol LeWitt created especially for the apartment. A small Kounellis painting hangs in the foreground.





Opposite: On the dining-room wall is a two-part work by conceptual artist Joseph Kosuth. A portrait bust of a Roman emperor and a recent Paolini work, *Mimesis,* are displayed on tables below. Chairs by Kazuhide Takahama. *Above:* A view into the study, whose door openings were heightened and jambs outlined in black. A red-and-white-striped Daniel Buren wall piece hangs above a sixteenth-century Italian safe case.

"Noble simplicity and quiet grandeur"—that was how the great eighteenth-century Neoclassicist Winckelmann described the visual glory of ancient Rome. Yet the words describe equally well the impression made by Mr. and Mrs. Giuseppe Casagrande's apartment in the stylish Parioli section of modern-day Rome. Indeed, the recently renovated apartment encourages all kinds of philosophical meditations—no small accomplishment for what is also a very livable residence. Before all else, the impressive ensemble of rooms is a study in dualities: the colors are black and white; the forms a dialogue of straight line and curve; and the art collection, the *raison d'être* of the remodeling, is a surprising combination of antique sculpture and contemporary art.

Light and dark, cerebral and sensual, old and new—the bold contrasts in this apartment produce an effect of unexpected harmony. The superb collection assembled by the Casagrandes includes works by such major figures as Sol LeWitt, Daniel Buren, Richard Long, Carl Andre, and Robert Ryman—all masters of conceptual and minimalist tendencies. And if the art seems ideally wedded to its setting, it is no wonder. What the couple wanted from their architects, Patrizio Romano Paris and Patrizia Pietrogrande, was an environment that would play gracious host both to their art and to their friends; the Casagrandes love to entertain almost as much as they love to collect.

For inspiration, the architects turned not only to the classical and modern works in the collection, but also to the design of the building that houses *(Text continued on page 153)*





The entry hall is a major gallery space for the Casagrande collection. In the foreground is a white Sol LeWitt floor sculpture. Behind it are sculptures by Bruno Ceccobelli (far left) and Carl Andre. A small striped baton by Andre Cadere leans against the wall at right.





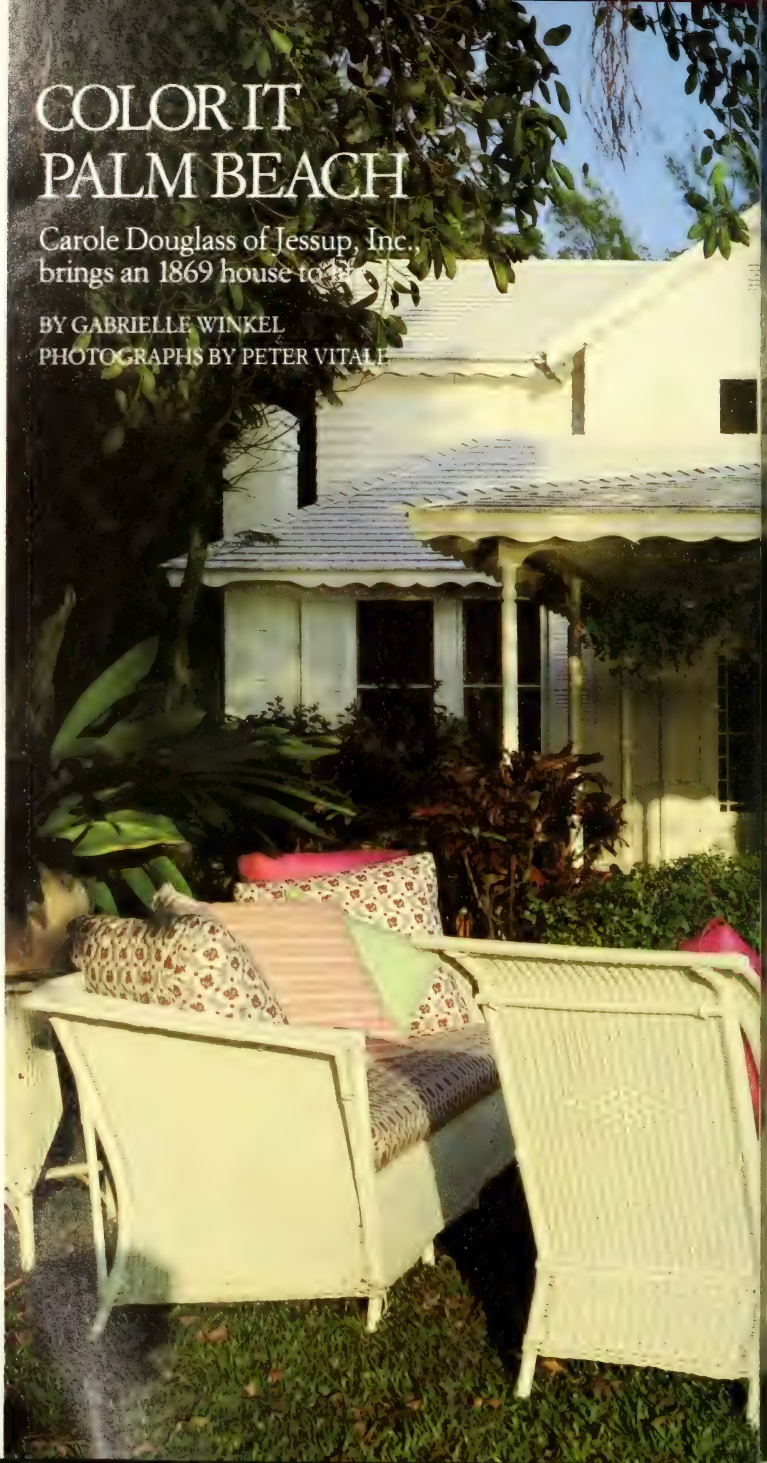


The spacious living room easily accommodates guests as well as art. The architects designed the intentionally low-profile sofas, which they combined with Mies van der Rohe seating and Saarinen tables. Through large window at rear is a glimpse of the terrace. Venini glass vases and Fontana "Red Pill" sculpture sit on table.

COLOR IT PALM BEACH

Carole Douglass of Jessup, Inc., brings an 1869 house to life

BY GABRIELLE WINKEL
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER VITALE



The view of Duck's Nest from Lake Worth, whose waters lap the back lawn. New and old wicker furniture covered in fabric from Pierre Deux.


91



Opposite: Azalea bushes add the finishing touches to the sitting corner of the master bedroom. Victorian furniture covered in "Floral Bouquet" by Lee Jofa. *Above:* The dining room exhibits majolica, at right, from John Rosselli, New York. Tablecloth by Clarence House. Hand-screened sisal rug by Peter Fasano.

The year is 1891. Palm Beach life as we now know it is only a twinkle in the Social Register's eye. Enter Mr. Henry Maddock, a retired English industrialist who wants to build a permanent residence on the lakefront property in Florida he has owned for five years.

Mr. Maddock orders a prefabricated house from a manufacturer in New York and has it brought down piece by piece on barges. The house comes complete with fifteen rooms (some octagonal in shape), stained-glass windows, and several charming gables, and is placed just a few steps from the shores of Lake Worth. The house is named Duck's Nest because ducks settle on this part of the lake each winter. As a nod to its assembly date, the house is numbered 91 with a curlicued rope on a lakefront gable.

Several tenants and many years later, while Palm Beach is becoming a fashionable vacation spot, the Maddock family lives in a compound of houses around Duck's Nest. And, in 1981, interior designer Carole Douglass and her hus-



band, Stone, from New York City are given the opportunity to rent Duck's Nest from Paul Maddock, Henry's grandson and the current owner.

The house had a somewhat "dated interior," and Mr. Maddock commissioned Mrs. Douglass, Sunny Bippus, and Mimi Maddock Kemble—all designers at Jessup, Inc.—to redesign and reconstruct Duck's Nest. The project was a labor of love for all involved, especially for Paul Maddock, who had spent most of his childhood there and had overseen two other renovations.

Mrs. Douglass has kept the Victorian flavor of the house, but through a contemporary sensibility. The Victorian passion for overstuffed chairs, informal furniture arrangements, and the combination of various patterns has been taken a step further. In the loggia, the octagonal-shaped room that is one of the Douglasses' favorites, new ceiling fans have been hung from the original tongue-and-groove ceiling. Both old and new pieces of furniture have been covered in an array of colorful chintzes. The flooring, made up of coquina with tile inserts that were brought down from the East in 1891, has been patched with newer flooring bought to match.

Since the exterior of the house and the stained-glass windows are protected by local landmark laws, Mrs. Douglass took advantage of the stained-glass squares in the living room to create an "ice creamy" feeling in contrast to the bolder, brighter colors of the loggia. To soften the angles of the enlarged T-shaped room, the decorators chose curvy, smaller-scaled furniture and placed it on the diagonal.



The T-shaped living room takes its color cues from the stained-glass windows. Curtain fabric by Vice Versa; all other fabrics by Brunschwig. Sisal rugs by Stark accent the newly restored pine floor.







Though the Douglasses do much of their entertaining outside, they also enjoy the dining room, complete with a set of Thatched Cottage china that John Maddock & Sons used to manufacture in England. The original Ivy wallpaper, a Maddock favorite, remains in good condition. The master bedroom above the loggia is filled with wonderful furniture that Mrs. Douglass calls "Victorian la-la," which came with the house and was repainted and covered with a bright fabric classic from Lee Jofa. Six additional bedrooms and a guest house can accommodate many out-of-towners. And everyone has plenty to do—swim, play tennis, simply relax, or explore the "jungle"; ironically, across the street from one of Palm Beach's first houses is one of the largest pieces of undeveloped real estate in the city.

Life is hardly Victorian at Duck's Nest—days are informal and easygoing—and one thinks that the original Mr. Maddock, who broke tradition by settling in Palm Beach, would have wanted it that way. □

Produced by Carolyn Sollis



Preceding pages: Two details of the living room offer the vivid colors of the sunset over Lake Worth, the original stained glass and Jessup Inc.'s harmonious pastel decoration. *Right:* The sunlit loggia blossoms with plants and "Havana" fabric by Rose Cumming. Red-and-white fabric by Clarence House. Green "Coreaux" fabric by Brunschwig.



I'LL TAKE IT, MONSIEUR KUGEL

Pleasing the eye is what this Paris shop is all about

BY OLIVIER BERNIER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES MORTIMER



Right: In Jacques Kugel's shop, a Louis XVI child's chair bought from the collection of the Prince de Ligne sits under a Régence table that belonged to the Arenbergs. On the chair, an oval eighteenth-century trompe l'oeil painting; a Bavarian dog on a cushion in painted carved wood sits on the floor. In the center of a large skylit room hung with chandeliers and arranged with eighteenth-century furniture and objects, *above,* a circular stairway designed by Georges Geffroy leads down to a room packed with chairs, globes, ivory, and a collection of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century German, Flemish, and Tyrolean cabinets.







This page: The door opens to Jacques Kugel's shop and the visitor looks squarely at a handsome Louis XIV Boulle cabinet filled with eighteenth-century silver and silver plate. Kugel is examining the marks on a sugar shaker. To the right of his face, important eighteenth-century soup tureen made by L. Lenhendrick. *Opposite:* In Mr. Kugel's office, panels of boiserie open like the doors of a closet to reveal lighted shelves packed with porcelain.







Just a few hundred feet from the Place de la Concorde in Paris, on the rue St.-Honoré, you will see two small windows filled with glittering gold objects: that is Jacques Kugel's antiques store. Calling it a store, however, does it something less than justice. To be sure, this is a commercial establishment, not a connoisseur's private hoard, but then again, the quality of the objects, their diversity, their rarity, and their cost ensure that they can belong to no ordinary *antiquaire.* Indeed, although anyone may ring the bell and wait for the plain wooden door to be opened by an attendant, Jacques Kugel's clients are often the owners of famous collections, people whose great wealth entails anonymity and the most rigorous discretion.

Balzac once wrote that antiques dealers should be almost invisible. Kugel almost fits that description: slight, gray-haired, neither short nor tall, he tends to wear well-cut, discreet suits and dark ties. Were it not for the energy he radiates, in fact, one might not notice him at all, especially since he often seems to look at almost anything except the person with whom he is actually speaking; but then, from behind thick glasses, his eyes come darting back sideways. It would be a great mistake to think that he hasn't noticed you: he hasn't missed a thing.

Unlike the other major Paris *antiquaires,* who form a close-knit little group, Kugel goes his own way, quite disdainful of set classifications. Alone among his peers, he has never bothered to become an official expert, able to define price and authenticity before a court of law. Nor does he care what his confreres think. Ever since the thirties, when he began to buy and sell in conjunction with his father, he has refused the comforting companionship of his kind. Just after the war, he opened his own shop on the Left Bank and immediately began to gather unexpected objects. It is usual in Paris for an *antiquaire* to have a well-defined specialty; Kugel, on the other hand, buys whatever pleases him, so a visit to his shop is always rich in surprises.

The wonders begin just past the door. In the very first room, the walls are lined with shining pieces of silver and vermeil—a sixteenth-century Augsburg drinking cup or a

Left: Jacques Kugel is described as the first dealer in Paris after World War II to make a point of dealing deliberately in unusual things. This group of chairs includes several pieces of a set attributed to Sené and made for a Louis XVI music room, a single rare example of a Louis XVI chair signed by Jullien, a curvy-armed Portuguese chair made in colonial wood for the Braganzas in the eighteenth century, a nineteenth-century Russian peasant chair. *Above:* One of four Italian papier-mâché medallions made for a Piedmontese house as a charming substitute for the same thing done in marble and often used as decoration.



contemporary sculpted platter large enough to hold a king's ransom is just a vitrine away from the most exquisite French eighteenth-century silver tureens, serving dishes, coffeepots—all witnesses to the perfection achieved by pre-Revolutionary silversmiths. These pieces all bear the proper marks, of course, and many are documented from the moment they first came into being. In the middle of the room, a large, glass-covered table is covered with dozens of precious boxes, French, Russian, Swedish, some gold, some silver, some with miniatures, others that open to reveal the tiniest of implements. It is all a good introduction to the three floors of room after room, where the visitor moves among an endless array of extravagant objects: upstairs for silver, down the long gallery and into more large rooms for furniture, paintings, and curiosities like the German eighteenth-century trunk fitted with drawers in which a full service of carved crystal glasses is neatly arranged. Then there is the staircase that winds down to a lower floor where more furniture is supplemented by porcelain, glass, terra-cotta sculptures, bronzes, and a whole wall of open shelves filled with an array of tall, curiously shaped ivory objects.

These ivories were carved purely for pleasure, often by princes and kings. They stand, a concatenation of odd, evocative, yet utterly functionless forms, sometimes swelling into open spheres or cubes through which we can look in at minuscule portraits, or simply into other, more exotic geometric shapes, reaching out in points and spires, and all made simply to please the eye. *(Text continued on page 150)*



Above and right: Ivory objects were made and collected as curiosities by courtiers across Europe from the sixteenth to early nineteenth centuries. Louis XVI used a simple turning machine to form his own ivory fantasies. Kugel collects ivory, globes, and armillary spheres both for himself and his clients. "Globe" makes a German pun on "Kugel," which initially sparked his interest.







Opposite: For breakfast by the terrace, iced espresso and croissants to be served on Art Deco *verre doublé* plates. Brussels carpet covers the 1840 chairs. *Above:* In the mirrored spa, a West German exercise bike, whirlpool steam bath, and towels on library steps.

EXERCISE IN STYLE

Designers Robert Denning and Vincent Fourcade turn a cellar into a spa for their Manhattan town house

BY MARGARET MORSE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY EDGAR DE EVIA



Opposite: Over the bed, a mirrored recess heightens the low ceiling and the bibliophilic atmosphere. *Above:* Continental café furniture and baskets of zinnias set the scene for lunch—borscht ladled into tag-sale china on Georgian silver plates.

New Yorkers are not known to let unused space stay unused for long. Witness the "new" ground floor in the brownstone of decorators Robert Denning and Vincent Fourcade. Mr. Fourcade hit upon the idea of turning the windowless basement into an apartment that could be alternately rented out as a pied-à-terre and used as a vacation-at-home retreat from the larger living quarters upstairs.

It was a small space but no small task. Plumbing pipes had to be rerouted. Mirror was hung everywhere, even behind an armoire, to multiply the visual space. New French doors in the Gothic Revival style opened up the dining area and the bath to the terrace.

By day the queen-size bed is done up divan-style with pillows. The tufted-leather box spring suggests a Chesterfield sofa. At its head is a built-in mahogany bookstand with a *faux*-marquetry base—also a Fourcade custom design. Opposite the bed is a Lord & Burnham greenhouse with a Universal Fitness machine—and an easy chair. This is a gym you can live in. Despite the prevalence of Biedermeier pieces, the room's vintage is varietal, not pure period. A remnant of "grand opera" carpet is set into a border of terra-cotta tile—and looks all the more plush for it. The same tile is used on the soffits overhead and in the bath and greenhouse. The marbelized paper on the ceiling was specially scored to repeat the tiled effect.

The room repays close inspection: stenciling on the built-in bookshelves, library lamps, swagged hobnail trim on the leather chair, and, in the dining area, a trompe l'oeil orchid vase (holding live blooms), and a black bust of Bacchus hiding behind the hydrangeas. It's no surprise the current tenant is very happily ensconced here. □

Produced by Carolyn Sollis



The modest space has the compact grandeur of a private car on the Orient Express

Right: Pattern extends from floor to ceiling—carpet by Braquenié of Paris, a Biedermeier armoire, and Brunschwig marbelized paper. *Below:* Lean-to greenhouse is reflected on the brick wall next door, in an arched mirror topped with green trelliswork.









First her birthplace, then her home, the Museo Frida Kahlo is now a tribute to her art

A PAINTER'S PASSION

BY HAYDEN HERRERA

PHOTOGRAPHS BY EVELYN HOFER

Dressed in a Tehuana costume and wearing the earrings that Picasso had given her a few months before, Frida Kahlo with her pet eagle, 1939. *Above: My Grandparents, My Parents and I,* 1936, shows Frida at the moment of conception, as a fetus and as a child in the patio, holding her family tree.



A view from the garden looking at the patio of the original part of the Kahlo house, where pre-Columbian idols preside like sentinels. At the top of the steps to the left, a green door leads into the living room, now turned into a gallery for Frida Kahlo's paintings.





Opposite: Frida and Diego in their dining room, photographed by Rivera's assistant, Emmy Lou Packard, in 1941. *Above:* In 1946, Rivera built a studio for Frida in a style he called "Aztec, Mayan, and Rivera traditional." Frida's worktable faces across the garden to her bedroom window.

The Frida Kahlo Museum in Coyoacán, on the southeastern edge of Mexico City, is perhaps the only museum in the world that was once a woman painter's birthplace and home and is now a tribute to her art. Although it is not one of the neighborhood's low, thick-walled colonial mansions, the museum fits in neatly with the scale and shares the dignified proportions of the older houses that line Coyoacán's mostly cobblestone streets. Even so, it is in many respects extraordinary. Its walls are painted a brilliant, eye-catching blue, and the window frames are themselves framed with bands of red. At the entrance we read the words "Museo Frida Kahlo," and we are greeted, or rather confronted, by two fearsome guardians—huge papier-mâché Judas figures made to be laced with firecrackers and exploded on Sábado de Gloria, the Saturday before Easter. They offer fair warning: we are entering a house of dualities: life and death, joy and sorrow—where every detail has been considered.

The museum's first room is actually a sunny patio that gives onto a large garden where a small pink pyramid—a pedestal for pre-Columbian idols—nestles among trees. The words "Frida and Diego lived in this house 1929–1954" are inscribed on one of the patio's enclosing walls. Frida Kahlo married the great muralist Diego Rivera in 1929, when she was 22 and he was 42. Only three years before, she had begun to paint while lying flat on her back convalescing from injuries suffered in a terrible bus crash that nearly destroyed her. The 200-odd paintings that she produced in the next 28 years were her autobiography, a tale of triumph as well as of an anguish that was both physical—she underwent some 35 surgical operations—and psychological: she was tormented by the ups and downs in her marriage to Rivera. Except for the 1930s, when the couple lived first in the United States and then in two modern houses that Rivera had built in nearby San Angel, the blue house in Coyoacán was their home until Frida Kahlo died in 1954. After her death, Rivera gave the house together with all of its belongings to the people of Mexico in order to perpetuate his wife's memory. It opened to the public in 1958. Today it is one of Mexico's most fascinating museums.

The house was built in 1904 by Frida's father, the photographer Guillermo Kahlo, whose portrait painted by Frida hangs in what used to be the living room. The original U-shaped floor plan is simple: rooms are laid out around the patio, which, since there is no interior hallway, serves as an outdoor corridor. Here Frida romped as a child, as she herself tells us in *My Grandparents, My Parents and I,* a 1936







painting depicting her house and family. And here as an adult, Frida sometimes took her paints and brushes because she liked to work in the sun. After lunch she loved to amble in the adjacent garden, followed by her pack of bald Aztec dogs. With great tenderness, she watched over the flowers, the fish in a small pool, her pet monkeys, parrots, turkeys, even an osprey called Gertrude Caca Blanca.

The first room the visitor enters is the living room, the place where the Riveras entertained friends from all over the world, among them Sergei Eisenstein, George Gershwin, Matta, and Dolores Del Rio. In 1937, after Rivera had convinced the president of Mexico to give Leon Trotsky asylum, this was also the site of the Dewey Commission hearings that Trotsky called for in order to disprove the charges hurled against him by Stalinists during the Moscow trials. (Frida graciously lent Trotsky and his wife the house for two years while she and Diego lived in San Angel.) Today the living room is a gallery for Frida's paintings. They look wonderful here, because the context of her possessions helps to make the paintings' content more concrete and understandable. Her last work, a still life of *(Text continued on page 160)*

The Riveras' dining room testifies not only to their passion for Mexican handcrafts but also to the flamboyance with which they made each day a visual feast. *Above:* On the dining-room mantelpiece, a Mexican eagle spreads its straw wings. The naïve still life was traditional in provincial Mexican dining rooms during the nineteenth century.





Opposite: Behind a bowl of polychromed clay fruit on the kitchen table loom giant pots used for preparing *mole*. *Above:* Frida placed a photograph of her adored "Dieguito" in her bedroom next to an armoire stuffed with her dolls and beneath a



cabinet containing Rivera's tin soldiers plus a toy skeleton. *Left:* In 1946 Frida Kahlo painted *The Little Deer* after undergoing a spinal fusion. Portraying herself as a wounded deer, she suggests that she was prey to sufferings she could not flee.



Above and right: Frida's art was rooted in her life: this pillow embroidered with a Sacred Heart and the bedspread stitched with flowers reappear transformed by fantasy in her paintings. *Opposite: Self-Portrait as a Tehuana,* 1943, reveals her obsessive love for her unpossessable husband, Diego Rivera.



COLLECTION OF DOLORES OLMEDO PATIÑO, MEXICO CITY

COLLECTION OF MR. AND MRS. JACQUES GELMAN, MEXICO CITY





SUMMER UNDER WRAPS

Designer John Saladino welcomes warm weather with cool slipcovers in pale colors

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER VITALE



Twin high-backed sofas form an intimate inglenook in the huge drawing room. In cinnamon velvet for winter, sofas wear ice-blue summer cottons.



Left: Graham Saladino under a birch tree near the breakfast room. *Opposite:* The breakfast room, at one end of the house, is like a grotto with its stone floor, murmuring fountain, and Tiepolo-inspired cloud ceiling painted by Robert Morgan. High-gloss walls are palest mauve. Under violet summer covers, Saladino-designed barrel chairs.

Like all good decorators, John Saladino luxuriates in color, texture, shape, and atmosphere. He speaks of his circular dining table, whose top is lacquered with aubergine auto-body paint, as "an inky pool." He takes a deep and subtle pleasure in the modulation effected by glossy celadon woodwork against his dining room's matte grayed-periwinkle walls: "The blue alone would be cloying; the matte alone would be dull." He regards changing his country house into its summer garb as "dissolving the heaviness of winter into pale light."

This transformation is accomplished with slipcovers only. The drawing room rug stays down; the window treatment, lean in winter, remains unchanged. And yet suddenly, unmistakably, summer arrives when the upholstered pieces, in velvet or wool, are covered by cottons in pastel tints.

John and Virginia Saladino's 1929 house stands on a Connecticut hilltop, and from their gardens they look into a vast forest preserve.

The views within the house are also impressive. John Saladino points out that the main-floor plan achieves a Beaux Arts ideal: "sequential spaces that allow you to see through an entire house from glass to glass." At one end, a baronial drawing room culminates in French doors under a fanlight, and on its inner side, four steps higher, an entrance hall forms an octagon (shown in House & Garden, February 1982). The hall also leads to the main dining room. Finishing the sequence, which is punctuated by repeated fanlights and arches, a stone-paved breakfast room is a second great octagon, this one open to the garden in three directions.

Whatever the season, John Saladino seeks to "pull color through the house." In summer, blues drift from space to space, cool in the drawing room, warmer in the two dining rooms. The sense of drifting, through the rooms and out of doors, is what the Saladinos love best about summer. □

By Elaine Greene. Produced by Kaaren Parker Gray





As many as ten can be seated around John Saladino's "inky pool" of a table. Barrel chairs, taupe wool-clad in winter, are in their pearl-gray summer covers. Dolphin- and shell-carved chair is a Venetian antique, whimsically echoed with real shell dishes. From England come late-eighteenth-century sideboard and Adam girandoles. Except for girandoles, nothing hangs on these walls — a strategy aimed at achieving informality.

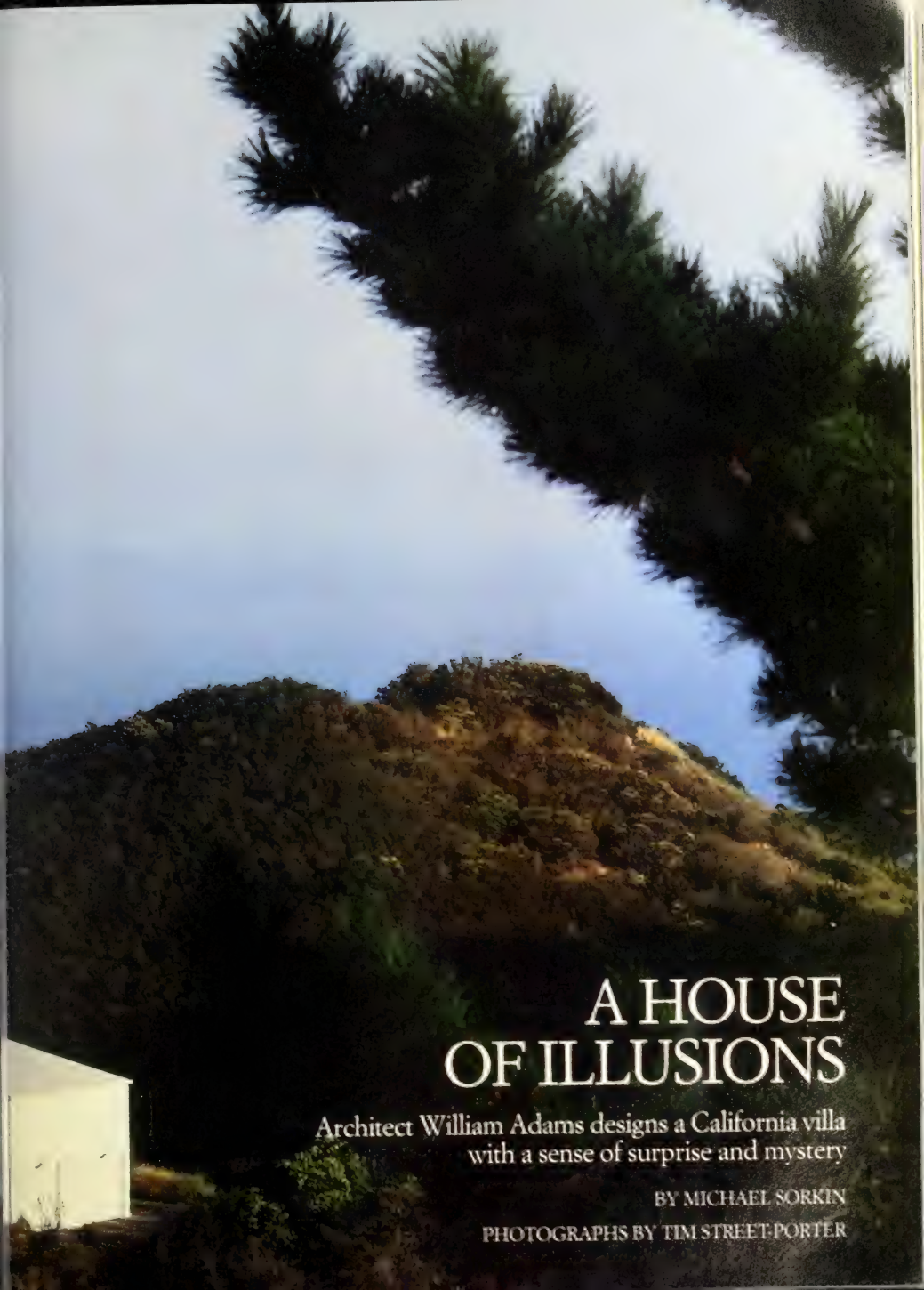




All fair-weather family lunches are served in the loggia, sheltered from the sun and offering, through the columns, a perfectly framed forest view. Chairs and Post & Beam sofa are John Saladino designs. Sofa's slipcover is fine terry cloth. Ancient Roman sink rests on Baroque Roman supports. Above it, eighteenth-century [illegible] and swag [illegible] France.







A HOUSE OF ILLUSIONS

Architect William Adams designs a California villa with a sense of surprise and mystery

BY MICHAEL SORKIN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TIM STREET-PORTER

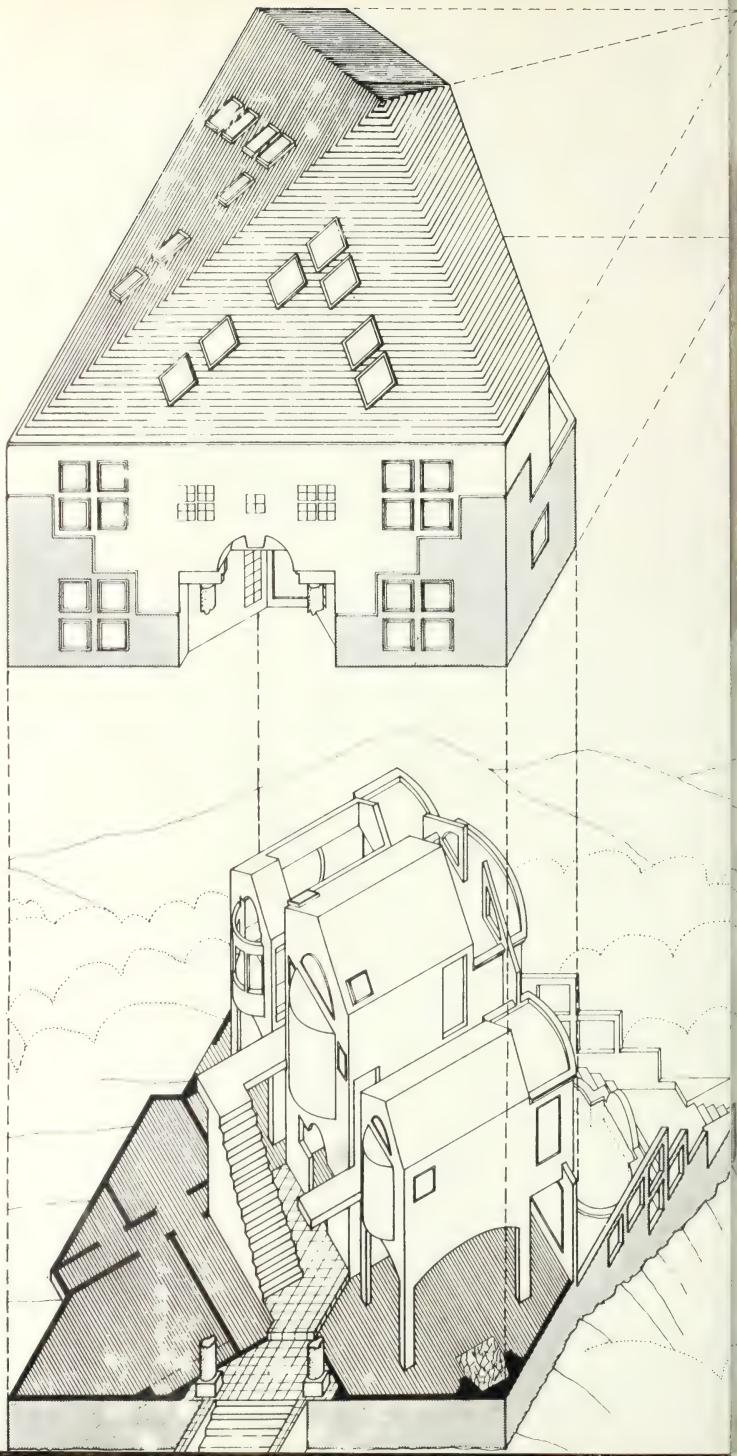
Preceding pages: Spectacularly sited in the mountains near Los Angeles, the land-facing façades of this house by architect William Adams are meant to evoke the image of a rural villa of the Italian Renaissance. *This page:* Architect's drawing shows how the three miniature "houses" are set within the Italianate shell. *Opposite:* A detail of the interior, whose small houses give the place an air of the fantastic.

The site—overlooking the Pacific, in the hills above Los Angeles—is commanding, a dramatic situation that calls for an architectural image of captivating intensity.

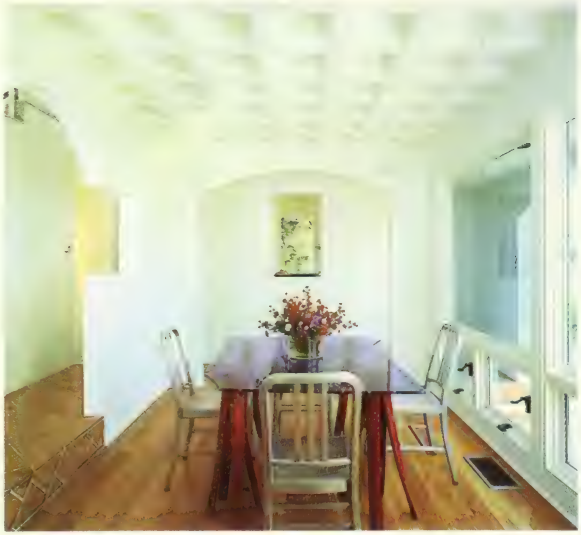
The house, by Santa Monica architect William Adams, rises to the occasion, seizing the high ground with a simple-seeming maneuver that belies a lurking complexity. On approach it looks to be an Italianate cube, a hip-roofed villa that makes the hills seem positively Florentine. The entry façade is symmetrically got up and detailed in the relatively standard-issue lexicon of palazzo Post Modernism: four-square windows and an indented arched doorway replete with mock keystone and double columns. The garage repeats the message, a miniature version of the main house.

But things are not exactly as they seem—the garage and landward façade turn out to be something of a setup. On the seaward side, a giant corner of the cube has been sheared off. The façade revealed by this move participates in the same formal vocabulary as its relation around front, but it so pares down the forms that they are transformed. Where the entry

Continued on page 158







Right: Rounded openings, white plaster, and platform seating give an almost Arabic atmosphere to an upstairs sitting room. *Above* and *below:* Arch-edged, coffered ceilings in dining room and living room create a sense of intimacy and detail. Both rooms are penetrated by openings that lend a feeling of connectedness with the rest of the house and with the outdoors. Dining table and two small living-room tables by artist Jim Ganzer Living-room seating from Industrial Revolution in Los Angeles.









The rural villas that inspired this house were for the most part working farms. Architect Adams evokes this heritage by setting the formal entry façade behind a low-walled courtyard that links the house to the garage, a kind of analog of a barn. Glowing light emphasizes the façade's thinness and hints at surprises within.



Opposite: For breakfasting in the kitchen, an eighteenth-century French painted bench with rush seat. *Left:* Gep Durenberger rebuilt the foyer fireplace so his antique French bust could look down like a typical elderly Frenchman at his window.

THE SEDUCTIVENESS OF THINGS

He may be smitten, but Gep Durenberger is clearly in charge of his possessions

BY ELAINE GREENE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHARLES WHITE

Gep Durenberger and his antiques—those in his house and those he gathers on two continents to sell in his California shop—have a relationship that he firmly controls. "I show respect," he says, "but I won't whisper in their presence. I dislike the unseen cord across the chair that you sense in the houses of some people—people who say they 'live with antiques.' My antiques live with *me*."

"Museum quality" furniture is very nice, Gep Durenberger adds—the distinguished style, impeccable provenance, and absence of damage—but he thinks such pieces "probably belong in a museum." What he looks for is a more modest kind of beauty, furnishings not from the English ducal household but from the lesser gentry, not from the French *château* but from the *manoir*. His pieces date from 1660 to around 1830, "from the restoration of the Stuarts through the Regency," and political history is part of their appeal.

Thoughts of an object's personal history move Gep Durenberger as much or more: Who ordered this piece? Who made it? Who, and who after that, owned and loved it? Durenberger enjoys knowing that his period of ownership will add to the patina and lore that any antique accrues. "A piece of furniture is like a string of pearls; use it or it dies," he says. "The notion that a chair is a work of art bothers me. A chair is made to sit on, and throw your coat on, and trip over, and wash and wax."

And so Gep Durenberger and his antiques live together his way, actively and closely, in a house that soothes and delights him, his visiting family, his sixteen godchildren, and his wide circle of friends. Mario Buatta met Gep Durenberger fifteen years ago when the interior designer bought from the dealer the first in his well-known collection of dog paintings. Buatta says he thinks of Durenberger's house as a time capsule. "When you enter it, you feel you have been transported in time and space, back to England or France two hundred years ago. With his love for objects and details and his gift for atmosphere, Gep has created a setting that seems exactly right as design and is serene and comfortable besides. What is astounding is that when you leave this romantic, insulated world and step outside the garden gate, you are in the heart of American suburbia."





...ouage: Living-room floor has ...ape Foeil wide boards painted in ...iagonals by Verita Campbell. Rare early-seventeenth-century English tapestry represents November. The colors in the house never get brighter than this room's.
Opposite: Looking from the antique Georgian front door into the entrance garden, whose arbor gate fits into a hedge wall.



Seen here in Gep Durenberger's garden are an antique croquet set, *left,* and a wood and wire birdcage, *above.* These whimsies might just as easily have been consigned to his shop, a place as idiosyncratic as his house.

Durenberger's house is part of an enclave built in a California beach community just before the 1929 crash. Half-a-dozen bungalows were completed, along with a beach club and a mansion on the palisades for the financier-builder. One of the bungalows is Gep Durenberger's, and although he preserves where possible its exterior stucco finish—"fifty years of wonderful crumble"—he has pushed out walls and changed roofs here and there over the past eleven years of his ownership. A major contribution to the old-world ambiance is the incorporation of antique European doors and windows in the bungalow. One of Durenberger's best finds was a dozen windows from a venerable Cotswold cottage. "I go weak in the knees when I buy an eighteenth-century window or door or a mantel in its original paint," Gep Durenberger says. Antique architectural elements are one of the specialties of his San Juan Capistrano shop.

The trompe l'oeil finishing of the bungalow's narrow-board hardwood floors has an architectural impact. Some are *faux marbre* and some are *faux bois* imitating worn wide planks. The worn look (preferably genuine), the faded



This page: A detail of Gep Duxenberger's bedroom shows one of his old Cotswold windows, installed by master craftsman Irving Howard. *Opposite:* Bedroom from renovated bathroom shows. Bed alcove is added space.





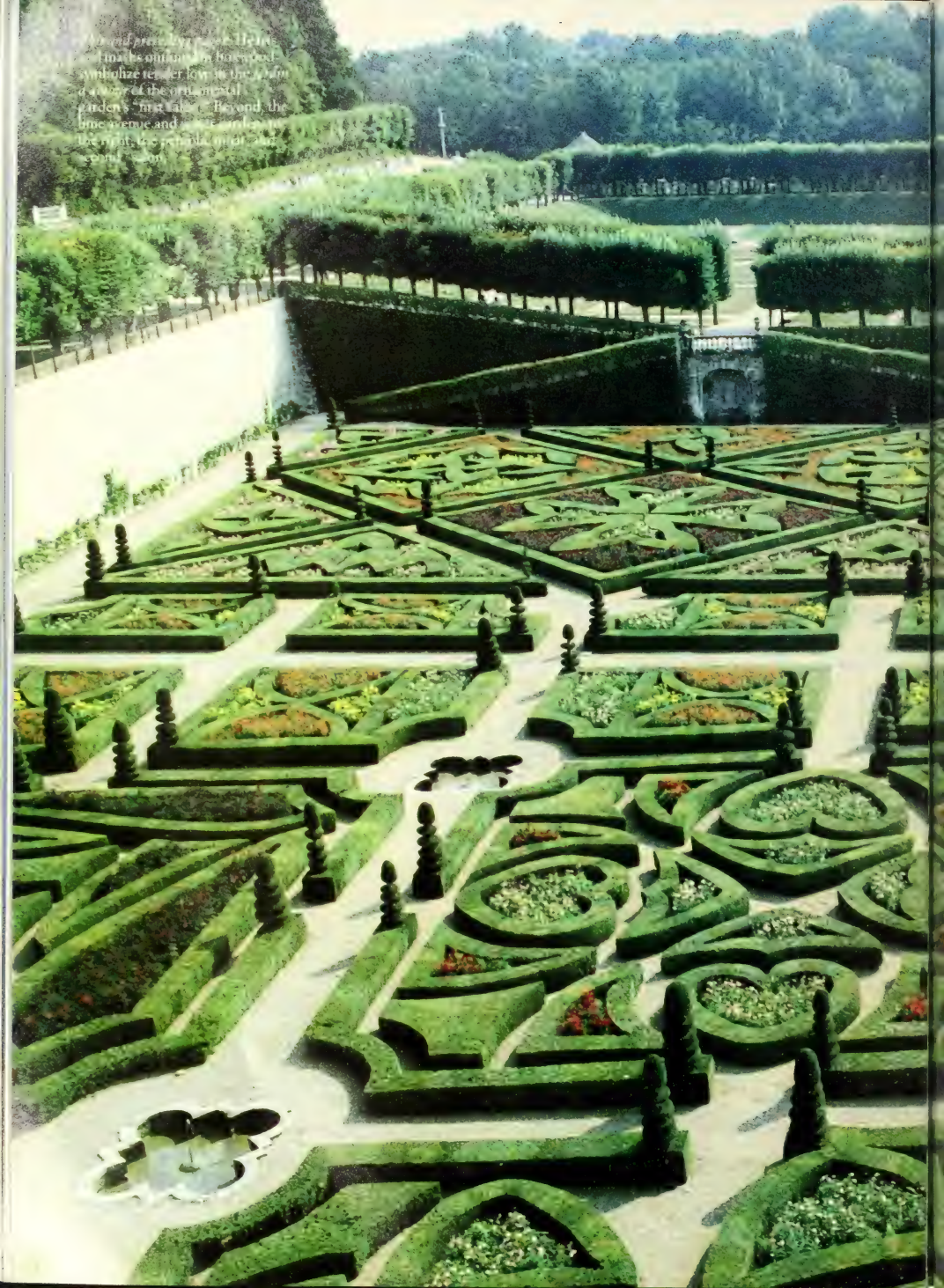
Right: Against the kitchen window, brought to California from England, any utensil becomes part of a still life, and the garden is its ever-beautiful background. *Above:* English cane-back chairs, Italian ceramic candlesticks, and a Flemish tapestry, all seventeenth century, make a distinguished dining room.

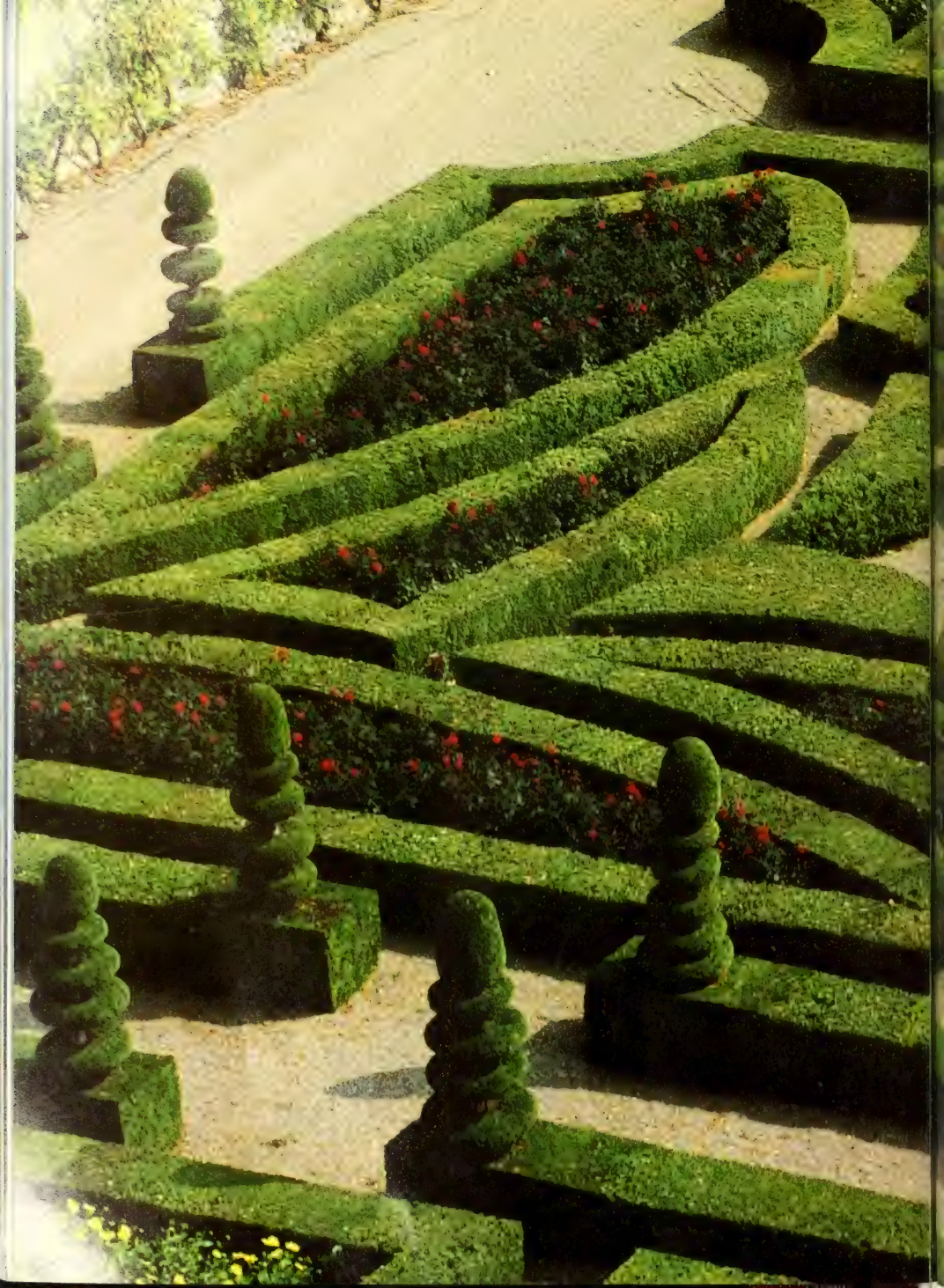
cloth, the mellowed color: to Gep Durenberger, these are the ultimate refinements.

Antiques also furnish the garden, which is seen and entered from every one of the six rooms and encloses the building on all sides. Another admirer of Gep Durenberger's house is his college classmate, designer John Saladino, who says, "The house and the garden are one; you can't discuss them separately. Not only are they connected through dozens of doors, but they are united by a totality of vision that is quite spiritual."

The dreaminess of the surroundings might suggest that a dreamer made them, but Gep Durenberger is a gregarious, energetic, nonstop achiever whose latest effort in what he calls "cultural do-gooding" is the Durenberger Series. Conducting tours to great houses in Britain and on the Continent is one of these undertakings, and organizing seminars on design is another. The seminars take place at his house, where there is a separate structure in which to gather. Participants agree that the meeting ground is as enriching as the experts he brings in. □ *Produced by Joyce MacRae*







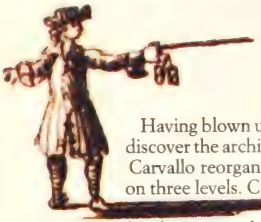




building and planting at Hidcote in the Cotswolds, and in Settignano, Bernard Berenson had asked Cecil Pinsent, the English architect who reinvented the Renaissance gardens in Florence, to make him a formal garden. When a substantial inheritance made it possible for the Carvallos to retire, they started exploring the Loire region and discovered what was left of Villandry and its once-famous gardens. His scientific training helped Doctor Carvallo become a specialist in the architecture of the sixteenth century; he passionately studied the works of Serlio, Vignola, and Philibert de 'Orme, as well as Jacques Androuet du Cerceau's engravings of gardens, published in *Les Plus Excellents Bâtiments de France* (1559–82). Having stripped the house of its eighteenth- and nineteenth-century additions (it took a hundred men a week to reopen the gallery; then new kitchens had to be built!), having rediscovered the moat and filled it with water to reflect the façades, he could start on brand new gardens. They are today "among the most remarkable in Europe," says Julia Berral in her *Illustrated History of Gardening* (1966). Peter Coats makes place for them in his *Great Gardens of the Western World* (1963), and Ronald King in his *Quest for Paradise* (1979) adds that France should be proud of them.

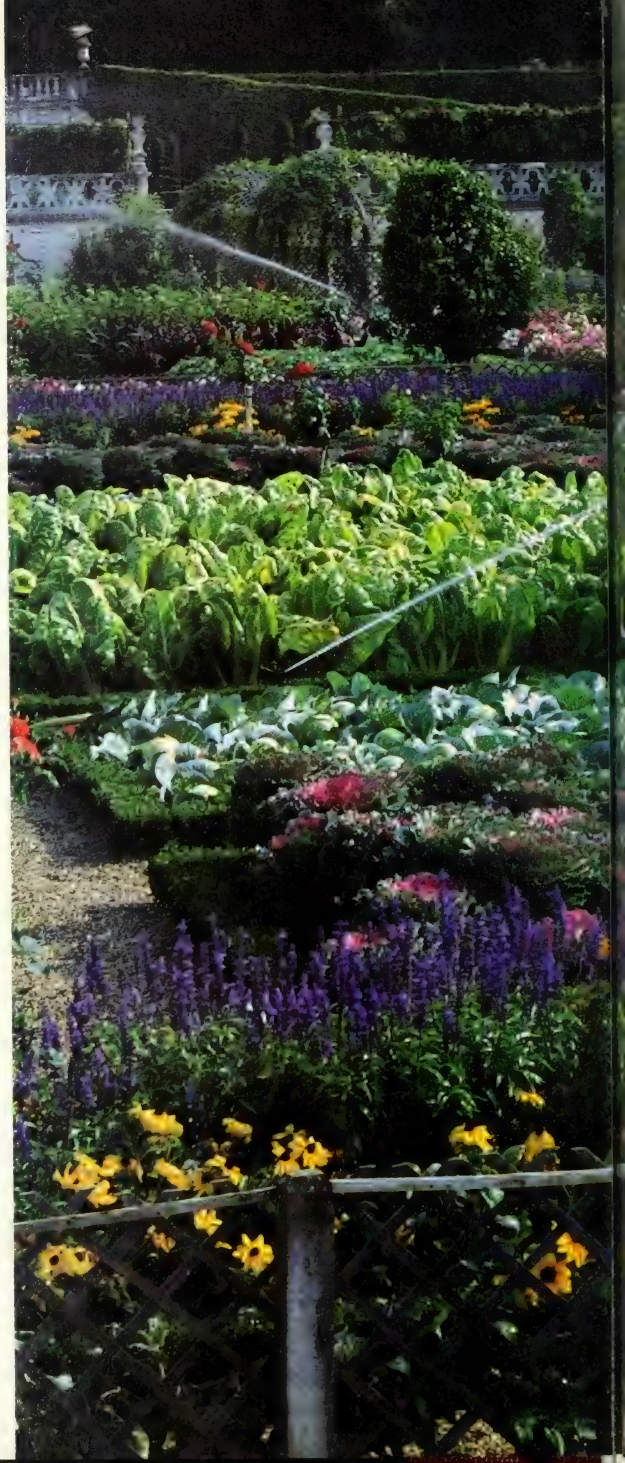
There were no records of Le Breton's gardens, no plans drawn by du Cerceau thirty years later; Carvallo started with only an often-quoted letter from Cardinal d'Aragon in 1570 praising the cos lettuce "finer than in Rome" and a few vestiges of undated terraces. Villandry is a brilliant synthesis of the American way of life in the years of prosperity, the traditions and climate of the châteaus of the Loire Valley, and a Hispano-Mauresque background.

A ballet of swords and daggers symbolizes in box and dahlias tragic love in the *jardin d'amour*, a twentieth-century translation of a Gothic garden tradition

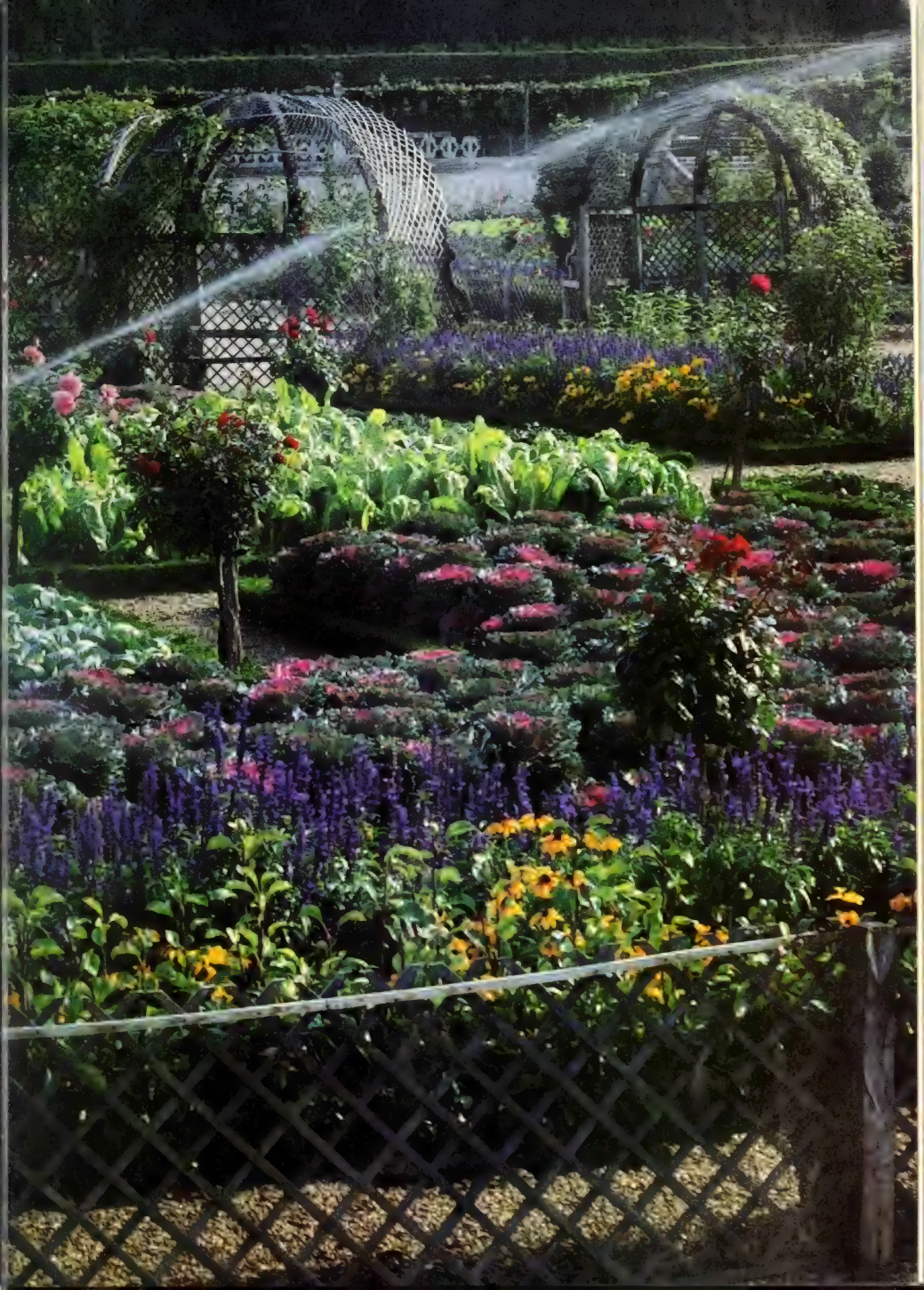


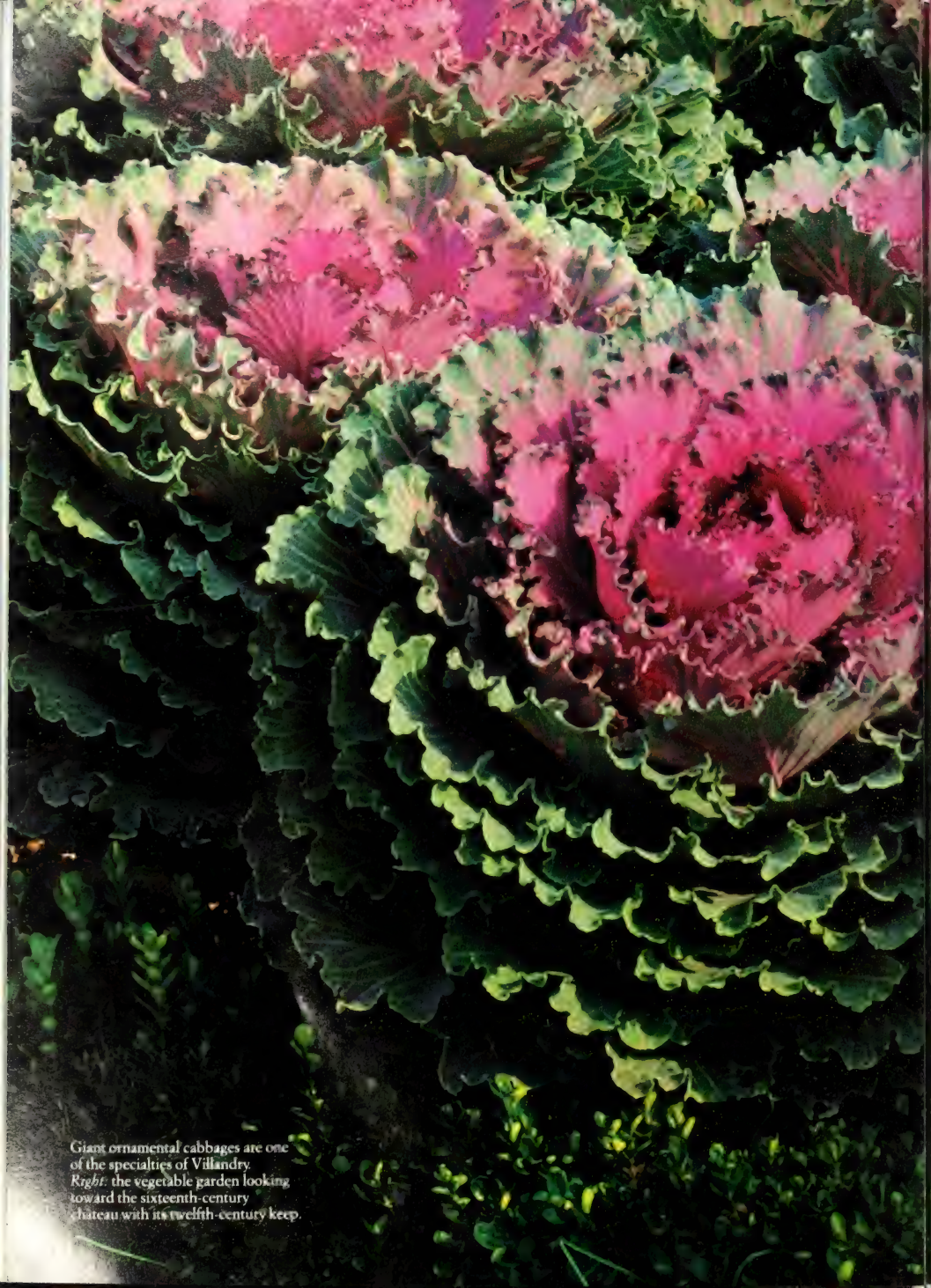
Having blown up the trees to rediscover the architecture, Joachim Carvallo reorganized the gardens on three levels. Carved in the hills sheltering the château on the east and south sides are two terraces with convenient benches from which to enjoy the landscape, the light, and the deeply satisfying geometrical design of the brightly colored parterres. Then comes a water garden, a basin set in lawn, in the style of Le Nôtre's eighteenth-century followers, providing water for the canals and moat and inhabited today by Canadian geese and exotic ducks. At right angles with it, an eighteenth-century avenue of limes leads to a ten-foot hornbeam labyrinth inspired by the one Pacello de Mercogliano had designed in 1500 for Cardinal d'Amboise at Gaillon. Immediately underneath are the ornamental gardens known as the first and second salon, separated by the moat. The first salon, almost an extension of the drawing room (French windows did not exist in the sixteenth century), is a Spanish garden of box hedges punctuated by clipped yew trees. The Moorish basins are copied from the fountain of the Lindaraja patio in Granada, where Washington Irving lodged when he was writing his *Tales of the Alhambra*. The trapezoidal parterre has been made to look right, that is to say symmetrical, by the clever use of perspective, and especially the diagonal steps to the lime avenue above. Kenneth Woodbridge suggests that the Spanish painter Lozano may have helped design the theatrical symbols of the "garden of love"—four squares representing passionate love (a dance of broken hearts), tender love (hearts, flames, and masks), tragic love (swords and daggers), and adulterous love (butterflies, fans, and love letters). The *jardin d'amour* at Villandry is a twentieth-century translation of a

Text continued on page 148

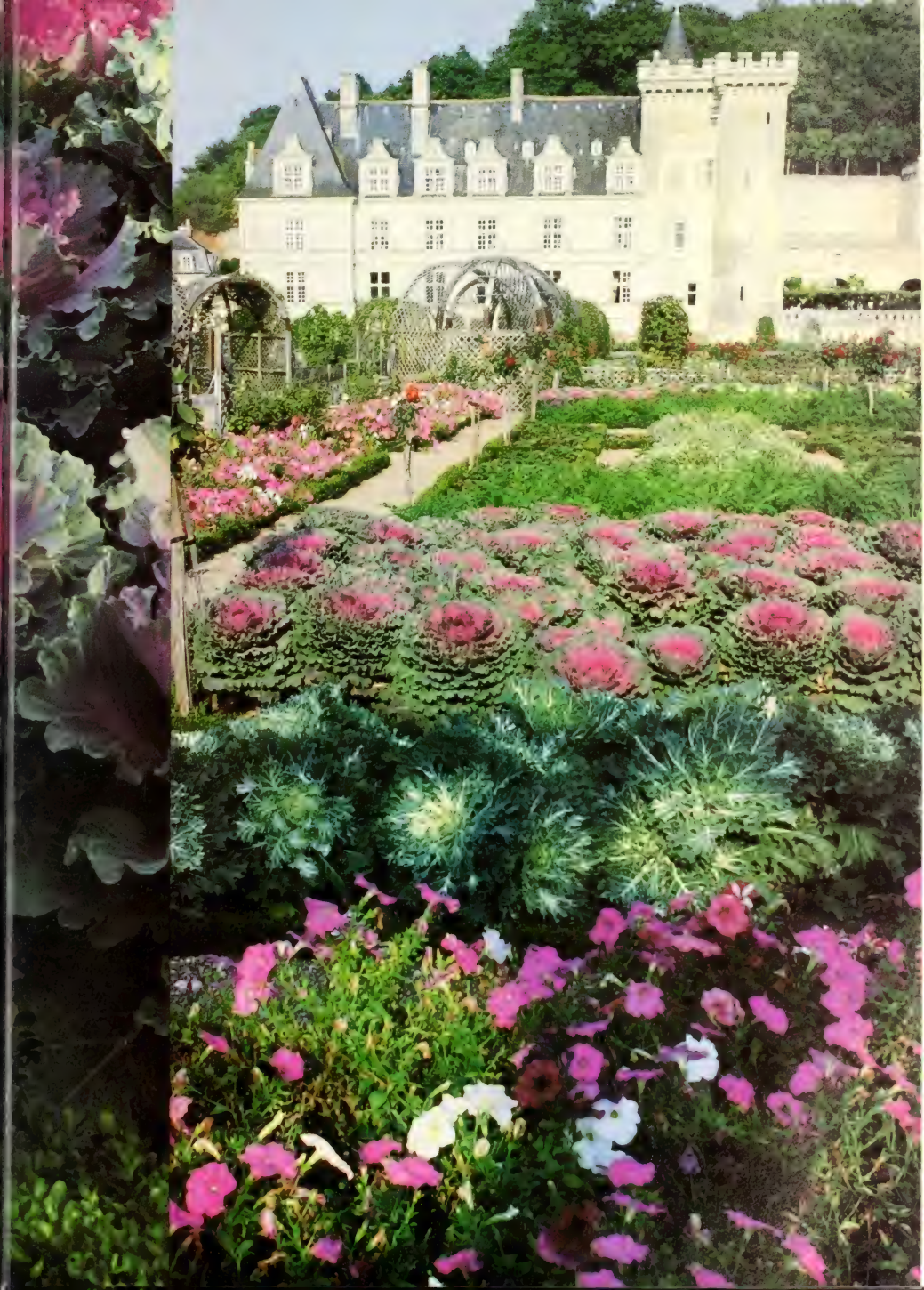


Trellised bowers covered with fragrant roses and jasmine are an invitation to sit and meditate in the kitchen garden, a colorful mixture of flowers, fruit, and vegetables in precisely patterned beds.





Giant ornamental cabbages are one of the specialties of Villandry. *Right:* the vegetable garden looking toward the sixteenth-century chateau with its twelfth-century keep.



Villandry's fame comes from the kitchen garden on the lowest tier. It is an extraordinarily peaceful place to sit in or just look at

(Continued from page 142) Gothic tradition but also an immense patio; the shade of the vine pergola and the murmuring water of the fountains and cascade are somehow reminiscent of the Alcazar. Across the moat, the second salon represents music, and on the side opposite the château is the herb garden with behind it more limes and the village.

The village, its life, lights, and volumes play an important part in the organization of the gardens architecturally and sociologically. Local people may have other things to do today than to work in or for the château, but its lovely façades and the life brought in by water, plants, artists, and tourists is part of their life. At the moment, young *Compagnons du tour de France,* a thousand-year-old guild of dedicated artisans, are hard at work in the stable courtyard: it will take twenty years to carve replacements for the balustrades made of fragile Brétigny stone, but those are the only sculptures at Villandry, which, unlike most Renaissance or Classical gardens, is not an open-air museum. Nor is it a botanical conservatory: on the contrary, Villandry's fame comes from the kitchen-garden on the lowest tier. Of no ordinary size, it is an extraordinarily peaceful place to sit in or just look at; its two acres have been divided into nine squares, all different, separated by large sand paths beautifully raked; at each intersection a basin more Gothic than Moorish and bowers covered with roses and jasmine invite the visitor to contemplation. The strict geometrical design of the squares has obviously been inspired by du Cerceau's engravings of Gaillon or Fontainebleau, but none of them is an exact replica of something that existed in the sixteenth century. Each square has a basin in its center for the watering cans (no longer used in this age of automation) and plots of vegetables chosen for their color and enclosed in ankle-high box hedges. The most spectacular are the ornamental cabbages of Japanese origin. Surrounding the various vegetables are plots of annual flowers and, for each square, there is a standard rose symbolizing the monk who tended it and a knee-high enclosure of oak trellises on which pear or apple trees are espaliered in cordons. It seems the first cordons were grown by a Frenchman called du Breuil as late as 1852; drastically pruned but obviously healthy, the cordons at Villandry bear fruit.

When he made his *potager* between 1914 and 1918, Doctor Carvallo needed the vegetables and fruit, if only to feed the wounded soldiers he and his wife were ministering to in the château turned into a war hospital. He had even dreamed of an orchard, which was made after his death in 1936. His son François was left with a serious maintenance problem: there are only six gardeners to clip twelve miles of box hedges, not to mention handweeding, watering, and making compost to renew the soil of the beds every third year, a third at a time. The perfection achieved here is the result of serious organization and complete dedication on the part of Monsieur and Madame Robert Carvallo, who own Villandry today. Knowing that kitchen gardens as such are a thing of the past, they have turned them into living paintings: the spring crop, be it red or yellow, blue or green, carrots or spinach, will become green manure for the second planting lasting from June into November. Even so, there must be a rotation of the crops and the same vegetable will not appear again in the same plot for a period of five years. Colored plans must be made in advance and archives carefully kept so that Villandry should be enchanting at all times.

In the words of his grandson Robert, "Joachim Carvallo . . . was an ardent and intransigent man whose enthusiasm was directed in turn to science, art, and mysticism. . . ." Having eliminated the sentimental garden and the "cows in the drawing room" of the romantics, he built a world of order and hierarchy: "the various elements of domestic order . . . each had its place, closely related, and without any possible confusion." As a young man, he had been a radical; as the creator of a garden of meditation he rediscovered God: "the art of gardens is the art of the inside, outside . . . with God's collaboration." □

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(Continued from page 90) Pleasing the eye, in fact, is what Jacques Kugel is really all about. Naturally enough, he looks when buying for certain objects he knows his clients are likely to want. These may be conversation pieces—curious instruments, perhaps—collectibles like watches, etuis, or Louis XVI furniture, or even what the French call *objets de standing*, the spectacular and famous pieces that will impress the new owners' friends. Antiques, after all, are as good a tool for social climbing as any, which is lucky for the *antiquaires*. Finally, there are specialized objects: anything that once belonged to Marie Antoinette, for instance, is likely to interest the Baroness Elie de Rothschild.

All this and more fills M. Kugel's store in what looks like unorganized profusion and, in fact, is. Clients, he says, like the thrill of finding things themselves. When an antiques shop is too tidy, it merely looks dull, uninviting: it lacks the delicious element of surprise that adds so greatly to the thrill of the object—something no one is likely to be deprived of here, since next to a seven-foot-high brass and tortoise-shell chest made in Antwerp around 1550 and adorned with little twisting columns of semiprecious stone and a multitude of drawers, we may find a splendid Russian chandelier, four chairs by Sené, one of Marie Antoinette's favorite *ébénistes*, each representing a different liberal art and still wearing the original pale-green paint on its elaborately carved back, and then an early-nineteenth-century table that unfolds to hold six different sets of sheet music, a pastel portrait of the Empress Maria Theresa, or, if you open a drawer at random, the odd gold box.

It is unquestionably half the fun here to ask for what you don't see. Next to M. Kugel's desk, for instance, a closet door opens to reveal a whole world of rococo Meissen figurines, crowded thickly on several shelves. Elsewhere, you may discover a Louis XV silver coffeepot or perhaps a Russian goblet: even the master of the house doesn't always know what he's likely to find. "I lose things," he says ruefully. "I put them away in a drawer and forget all about them. And then later I find them again." While this may be, in part, a shrewd marketing strategy, it also reflects Jacques Kugel's passion: more than anything he loves objects, so that to him, finding, seeing, and buying are just as important as selling. "Sometimes," he says, "I find a particularly good piece, bring it in, and sell it right away, and then I feel cheated. As long as the piece is here, it's mine, it's part of my collection, and I enjoy it just as if it were never going to leave again." Always optimistic, however, he looks to the future, to the next purchase. Once sold, the object no longer interests him: there is too much more for him to find next week, next month, next year.





Top: Rare Russian peasant's chair with wood-carver motif. *Above:* Moroccan mother-of-pearl table service.

Like all great passions, that for objects is irrational. Of course, quality counts, but there must be something more, an almost mystical rapport, so that the collector falls in love with a piece of silver, a table, or a bronze just the way he would with a woman. "First," Kugel says, "I look. Then something clicks. But if I'm not interested, I just don't see." Like his clients, Kugel's colleagues give him credit for seeing a great deal more than most people. It is no wonder: quite aside from his wide and varied expertise, Kugel, who speaks fluent French, English, German, Russian, Spanish, and Portuguese, is at home—and frequently present—in most western European countries. Traveling constantly, he attends auctions from Stockholm to Lisbon and buys from private owners as well. As it happens, circumstances these days tend to favor him. After the 1974 Portuguese Revolution, for instance, collectors started to sell. In Sweden in 1963, Parliament repealed the centuries-old law of entail, so possessions that could not be sold legally before are now appearing on the market. Even the deep shadows of Spanish palaces, filled with the loot of an empire, see the modern world creeping in and dislodging long-forgotten masterpieces.

Of course, usually an owner has to be coaxed into selling. Not only must he be convinced to part with his treasures, but the price offered must be right: too little and he is offended, too much and M. Kugel might find himself out of business. He manages to entice, however, where others fail because of a simple, yet remarkably clever psychological trick, which works all the better for being based on real feeling. Most dealers when they visit a prospective seller try to make the object seem undesirable: it is too small or too large or not quite the right period or in poor condition, they tell the owner in order to lower his expectations. What they are actually doing, Kugel says, is advertising the fact that they are preparing to offer far too small a price; then, quite often, the owner feels he's being cheated and refuses to sell. Nothing like this happens when Jacques Kugel is the prospective buyer. "I sublimate the object," he says. Far from harping on its faults, he exclaims enthusiastically on its beauty. *(Continued on page 152)*

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Pella. The significant difference in windows and doors.

(Continued from page 150) This, he tells the owner, is the best example there is of this sort of chair or porcelain or silver ewer, and, right at that moment, he believes it. Then, still full of awe, wonder, and delight, he makes his offer. Almost invariably the owner accepts it, partly because he feels flattered that his possession has evoked so warm a response, partly because anyone so obviously in love with the object must be offering the highest possible price.

Private clients are important: they sell, they buy, they get divorced and resell, or they die and their heirs make a beeline back to the dealer who sold the objects in the first place. Just as important, though, when it comes to buying, is the auction: it is an education—where else will one see such diverse offerings, such quantities?—a source, a check on the market; so, aside from attending all major European auctions, Jacques Kugel spends a few minutes every single day when he is in Paris at the Hôtel Drouot, the city's center for all its auctioneers. It is, indeed, almost an education in itself to watch Kugel there. Hands clasped behind his back, head bent forward to stare at the exhibits, he walks rapidly around the showcases, occasionally nodding to a colleague, stopping only long enough to pick up a piece of silver, some porcelain or glass. Then, after examining it intensely for twenty or thirty seconds, he puts it down, still without a word, and paces on; sometimes he breaks his silence to whisper a number and a price to his assistant who follows him, notebook at the ready.

One way or the other, whenever anything is really desirable Kugel manages to find it. Nothing, he says, is beyond reach, as long as there is a market for it. People are unaware of the treasures they own, so there is always more to be found than one might expect. The only unavailable object is the one for which there is no demand: eighteenth-century fans, for instance, or Palissy faïence, which were desirable at the turn of the century and fetched enormous prices. But if you are looking for a Germain tureen, a Riesener desk, or a Fabergé Easter egg, you need only a little patience and a great deal of money. Still, Kugel's is not really the place to go for Fabergé: the mention of twentieth-century pieces tends to evoke a melancholy sigh and the admission that in certain cases, perhaps, one can let oneself be tempted, but only very rarely; given the choice, M. Kugel would much rather buy an eighteenth-century Russian box. That is partly because Russian silver is often of superb quality, with inventive design and exacting craftsmanship, but there is another reason as well. The first Kugel shop was opened by a Russian ancestor in Minsk in 1810. At first, it was not an antiques store: that earlier Mr. Kugel chose to sell clocks because, he said, with timepieces you can't cheat. Either they work or they don't. That rule, slightly modified, apparently still applies to his Parisian descendant: when it comes to objects, clearly, either they will do or they won't.

Not unnaturally, a great many fakes have come M. Kugel's way, at auction, at other dealers, at collectors' houses; and he couldn't be more pleased. The more fakes you see, the more easily you can recognize them and the more unlikely you are to buy them. This is true of paintings and sculptures as well as objects, and it can occasionally make life difficult. When one of M. Kugel's clients showed him the splendid Renaissance bronze he had just bought, there was an awkward silence. The client, with much surprise, asked what was wrong; he was told and didn't much like it. Some years later, he tried to resell the bronze in question. It turned out to be a fake, of course, and then its owner remembered the one person who had had the integrity to tell him so in the first place.

The corollary to that kind of discernment is that Kugel often notices things other people miss, anything from a silver snuffbox to a five-foot German Baroque garden sculpture unaccountably ignored by everyone else at a recent auction. And that, in turn, is because he looks at so very great a number of pieces, year in, year out. "If you see ten thousand objects," he says, "five are interesting and you end up buying two and a half. It always works, just like the laws of chance: you will always find something to buy if only you look at enough." And then, he adds: "We often end up buying what is fashionable, thinking we are indulging our personal taste. In the late thirties, before Art Nouveau's renewed popularity, I bought Lalique jewels and broke them up to get at the stones." What then, is the next fashion? Empire furniture, he says, Neoclassical objects. People are tired of Louis XV furniture; it is time, once again, for a change.

Within M. Kugel's private collection, too, the fashion changes. He collected Béraud's views of late nineteenth-century Parisian life when no one wanted them and resold them when everybody did; but some things always please his eye: beautifully made old instruments, adorned even where no one needs to look, and, an apparent paradox, contemporary painting. Right after the war he was among the very first to buy a de Staël; when this writer expressed surprise, M. Kugel explained it all quite simply. A beautiful object is really an abstract form; its use is secondary to the harmony of its shape and proportions. For anyone trained to understand this, non-figurative painting holds an obvious appeal.

Still, splendor matters to him. He buys Russian pieces not only because they are both handsome and Russian, but also because they remind him of the great palaces around St. Petersburg, of the lavish display practiced by the czars and their court. Perhaps because he knows objects so well, he sees them not only as what they are, but also as what they have been. There is far too much restoration, far too much cleaning-up being done, he says. The patina of time should be preserved. And indeed, he has a point. Amid all his carefully orchestrated disorder, in that fascinating accumulation of treasures, history matters almost as much as perfect craftsmanship or innovative design. It may be M. Kugel's greatest gift that, in his hands, pieces that have always been valued for their beauty also take on a mysterious resonance as they link us directly to their glittering, glamorous past. □

Produced by Nancy Richardson

As one wanders through the highly ordered yet inviting spaces, one feels that the owners have found a perfect—and perfectly lovely—demonstration of the union of the mind and body

(Continued from page 68) the apartment. From the early thirties, the style is commonly called *Architettura Razionale,* an amalgam of stripped-down classical and no-nonsense modern. The splendid entrance area says it all: by judicious cuts in the wall between the foyer and living room, the architects created niches for the display of Roman fragments and at the same time established a classical effect of openness. The subtly rounded corners of the wall give the powerful impression that one is entering a kind of colonnade—yet there is not a single actual column or antique motif used. The past here is suggested, never insisted upon.

Having made the structural changes (which also included transforming an enclosed veranda into a sunny terrace), the architects' detailing followed as a matter of logic. Doors were removed from various public rooms and door openings were heightened to a processional scale; both jambs and window frames were outlined in black, providing contrast and emphasis; and the furniture, in the architects' words, was "left deliberately banal," so it would not compete for visual attention with the art—modern "classics" by Mies van der Rohe and Le Corbusier are by now self-effacing, and the architects designed sofas that would have no conspicuous profiles of their own.

And just as the Casagrandes had hoped, it is their art collection that has pride of place. As one wanders through the highly ordered yet inviting spaces, stopping here to peruse the austere intellectual delights of the Daniel Buren wall painting that the artist created especially for the Casagrandes, or there to enjoy the easy sensual *contrapposto* of a marble figure of Venus, one feels as if the owners have found a perfect—and perfectly lovely—demonstration of the union of mind and body. But after all, it was the Romans who told us: *mens sana in corpore sano.* ☐

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WILLS OF IRON, NERVES OF STEEL

Towards a New Iron Age, American Craft Museum I, New York, through September 4.

The art of the blacksmith is the focus of a veritable renaissance. This impressive collection of nearly 100 works by over forty artists (including six women) confirms that the mediums of forged iron and steel are now in some very capable hands. Standouts in the show include James Wallace's sturdy yet delicate wood-and-steel sled, David Poston's exquisite, perfectionist stainless-steel jewelry, and Stuart Hill's radiant *Sunburst Firescreen*



Grille, Klaus Walz, 1980

Executed with a great degree of vigor, but with a much higher level of refinement than the self-consciously crafty ironwork of two decades ago, the pieces selected for this exhibition are tempered with unusual grace, a strong demonstration of a vital art form.



HIGH STYLE FOR HONG KONG

Afloat in a sea of chinoiserie, Hong Kong has been notably devoid of first-rate modern design. Until, that is, the recent opening of I Club, a members-only retreat (with restaurants, an art gallery, and a disco, *above,* among other features) designed by Joseph Paul D'Urso. The young master of minimalism has devised a series of understated spaces punctuated by furniture classics (Mackintosh, Hoffmann) that provide a crash course on what Hong Kong has been missing all these years.



Temples of Big Apple by David Macaulay

CARTOON MAIL

A satirical perspective on architecture is the theme of a series of postcards published by the Architectural League in New York. By eleven artists as diverse as James Thurber and Red Grooms, Edward Koren and Michael Mostoller, they are lively play on the most static art form. One of the best: David Macaulay's fantasy of Johnson/Burgee's AT&T Building as a romanticized ruin, *left.*

ENGLAND'S GREEN AND PLEASANT STAMPS

The genius for gardening and landscape design is one of the greatest gifts of the British people, and now a new set of stamps issued by the British Post Office pays tribute to that living tradition. Each of the four adhesives depicts a great garden of the past four centuries. The seventeenth century is represented by the recently restored Pitmedden, in Scotland, a late Renaissance design much influenced by the Stuart court's close ties to France. England's greatest



landscape architect, Lancelot "Capability" Brown, was the creator of the gardens at Blenheim, *above,* one of his most extensive and brilliant compositions, selected for the eighteenth century. Biddulph Grange, in Staffordshire, has been picked for the nineteenth century, while Harold Nicolson and Vita Sackville-West's beloved Sissinghurst—the epitome of the romantic English flower garden—is the happy choice for our own century.



ISLANDS IN THE PINK

Surrounded Islands, Christo's $3 million environmental art project, *left,* was brought to spectacular fulfillment as the artist supervised the unfurling of some 6 million square feet of pink fabric around eleven islands in Florida's Biscayne Bay, a work of cosmic scale and unearthly beauty.

IS CONSENSUS NEXT TO GODLINESS?

Several years ago architect Charles Moore was asked what building type he would most like to design; he unhesitatingly answered, "a church." Actually, he had done that early in his career, when as an officer in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers he rebuilt churches that had been destroyed in the Korean War. But now with his Santa Monica firm, Moore Ruble Yudell, he has completed the first church of his mature career and has thus become one of the few avant-garde architects in recent years to address the problems of religious architecture in an age of changing religious values.

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church in Pacific Palisades,



The California Carpenter Gothic interior of St. Matthew's

California, is instantly recognizable as a work by Moore. Its exterior is domestic in feeling, with its shed roofs, protruding bays, and sash windows reminding us more of colonial meeting houses than of classical temples. But there's a pronounced note of California informality to it, too: this is not merely God's house, it's His condo.

Once inside, though, the California connection becomes far more focused and satisfying, for this is Charles Moore's homage to one of the greatest architects of the Bay Area tradition, Bernard Maybeck, whose famous Christian Science church in Berkeley of 1910 was a major inspiration. But there were dozens of others, too: in a series of sessions with the congregants of St. Matthew's, Moore devised his final scheme based on the parishoners' strong ideas of what they wanted their church to be. Many architects talk about participatory design, yet few practice what they preach. For the people of St. Matthew's, Moore's new church is an answered prayer. □ *By Martin Filler*



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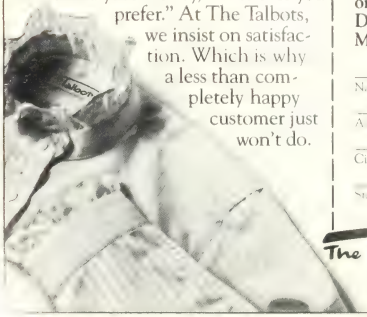
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JOURNAL

THE SHAKER BELIEF: ART PURE AND SIMPLE

Community Industries of the Shakers . . . A New Look. *New York State Museum, Albany, July 2, 1983–Jan. 8, 1984.*

The irony of the Shaker place in modern history is that one of the least materialistic of communities should be remembered primarily for the objects it produced. Officially known as the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing, this Christian sect received its more familiar name because of the rhythmic, shaking motions that the congregation exhibited during its worship services. Mother Ann Lee established the Shakers in England, but in 1774 emigrated to the United States with eight of her followers. She and her group made their home in Watervliet, New York, and gradually, through the nineteenth century, Shaker settlements were built in other parts of New York State, in New England, and the Midwest. Four basic tenets guided their religion: confession of sins, celibacy, communal sharing of all property, and detachment from worldly involvement and activities. Thus each Shaker colony strove to be self-sufficient, with its own source of food, clothing, and shelter. In order for this to be possible, it was essential that everyone—men, women, and the orphaned children they brought into the fold—be given assigned tasks and that their work be seen as part of the process of paying homage to the Lord. There was no thought of financial gain or enhancement of status. The labor was an end in itself, a concept reinforced by such Shaker slogans as "Put your



Shakers—Their Mode of Worship, lithograph, c. 1840

hands to work and your heart to God."

In that mysterious way in which form carries and conveys meanings, the objects now on view at the New York State Museum direct the attention to the body of Shaker beliefs and rituals. The first major museum to acquire Shaker pieces, the State Museum began its collection in 1927, at the very beginning of the twentieth-century's awareness of and interest in the products of this utopian society. Artists, most notably Charles Sheeler, had pointed out the fine aesthetic sense found in Shaker crafts, and so curators turned their attention to these items. The State Museum, in the forefront of this movement, worked directly with the few Shaker settlements still in existence in the 1930s and '40s, collecting in all areas of Shaker production, from furniture, clothing, and baskets through agricultural and leatherworking tools. Documentation of techniques was obtained firsthand, and photographs in the exhibit illustrate Shaker procedures.

Despite the fact that the pieces in the show span more than a century and range from industrial to personal objects, there is a remarkable cohesion of form and sensibility to be seen here. The most striking feature is the clean-lined purity of the shapes, what the Shakers referred to as "true Gospel simplicity." Their religion did not permit "odd or fanciful styles," as, for example, furniture that had the "beadings, moldings, or cornishings" so typically seen in nineteenth-century styles. When color was used, it always conformed to the outline of a piece and was in quiet though striking tones of cream, red-brown, blue, and white.



Buckets, late nineteenth century

But clarity of line and minimal decorative touches are only the most obvious elements of Shaker style. Underlying the powerful aura that their cabinets, baskets, chairs, dishes, and even their manufacturing equipment possess is a harmony of line and shape that is perceptible in all the work of Shaker hands. In their religious code, function and form were united in a mystical union that gave heightened significance to anything they made. Shakers believed that when an object "has in itself the highest use [it] possesses the greatest beauty." The inverse of this principle was also a tenet of faith: "Every force has its form." Nor did they wish to follow fashion, for, "We are not called to . . . be like the world; but to excel them in order, union, and peace, and in good works—works that are truly virtuous and useful to man in this life."



Shaker footstool, stained maple with woven cloth tape seat, c. 1880, made at the Mt. Lebanon, New York, Shaker community.

The ardor with which they pursued their monastic existence, the hours spent in meditation, and their experience of ecstatic visions are transmitted into their ordinary items. There is an intensity that projects from even the most humble Shaker piece that cannot be explained by any rigid canon of proportions but can always be related to the precepts that guided their labor.

On a more mundane level, the technical finesse and inventiveness that Shaker craftsmen exhibited must not be overlooked. One of the surprises in this exhibition is the revelation of the extent to which Shakers did business with the "world's people." The quality of these products and several Shaker innovations, among them the flat broom, paper-envelope seed packets, and the clothespin, attracted attention in the nineteenth century, and the communities had bustling industries that gave them profits with which to expand their land holdings. This was a deliberate strategy, and posters advertising Shaker clothing and dried sweet corn indicate that they had given some thought to marketing plans as well.

In time, however, the industrial revolution created too much competition for Shaker handcrafts, and their economic situation became tenuous. Simultaneously, the institution of orphanages in the late-nineteenth century redirected the flow of new generations from this celibate society.

Today there are only nine Shakers remaining in the United States—but an array of objects bear evidence to their world. Perhaps the Shakers would not be dismayed to have these items represent them, for the spiritual energy their creations emanate bring the community to life for the modern viewer. Their religious tracts may seem hopelessly alien to present-day attitudes, but their baskets, furniture, textiles, and tools speak vividly of a timeless union of the sacred and mundane. □

Mary Ann Tighe

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART 1983

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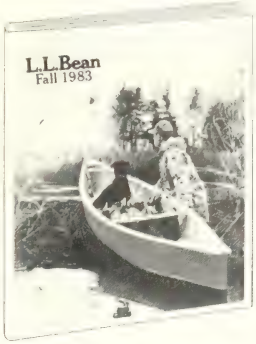
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HOUSE OF ILLUSIONS

(Continued from page 120) side evokes the formality of a villa, the sea side suggests the informal aggregation of a village, the picture-perfect whitewash of Mykonos or Santorini.

The house without, then, is a virtual compendium of Mediterranean-ness, a gentle recapitulation of that graceful paradigm of easy living. But this treatment of the exterior is also meant to create an atmosphere against which the more singular drama of the interior spaces can unfold, much as the simplicity of the façades acts as a foil for the atmospheric histrionics of the theatrical mountaintop weather.

The architect describes the project as conceived in terms of a remodeled shell, as if a traditional villa had been gutted and refilled with new forms. This, he suggests, is meant to evoke a "permanence, warmth, and romance" not conventionally associated with California. Feelings of "permanence" may be only dodgily coaxed from a freshly painted little house of stud, stucco, and shingle, but Adams's strategy of two-ness is right on the money in the romance department. It was precisely this sense of "surprise and mystery" that the client (who had lived previously in William Adams's very first house) came to him to find.

Inside the villa box, Adams has placed a row of three miniature houses, or "aediculae," in the word introduced into every architectural household by Charles Moore, a designer whose influence on Adams is seminal. These dollhouselike structures (Adams prefers the comparison to kids' forts) serve a number of purposes. Foremost, they introduce a touch of both charm and surrealism elemental to the overall strategy of creating suspense.

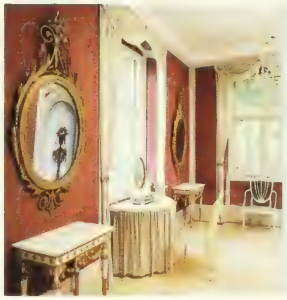
The little houses are also a powerful tool for modulating space. Instead of modernist "flowing space" or the compartments of traditional architecture, the aedicules create a space of ambiguity; specific places exist, but they always adjoin spaces that disappear into regions not quite known, giving the interior a delicious, satisfying uncertainty. Indeed, this is the special success of this house. To a formal territory that has—in many ways—become overly familiar, William Adams has restored a little magic and a lot of possibility. □

Produced by Elizabeth Sverbeyeff Byron

(Continued from page 62) ribbons and flowers on the mirror frames are made of beech and fir, a definite indication of Danish origin. The sofas and chairs of the entrance hall, or Garden Room, done in a simplified Louis XVI style, are lined up against the wainscoting in the traditional arrangement. Typically for Liselund the corners of the Garden Room are splayed and provided with domed niches. Each niche shelters an altarlike construction. One is an actual heating oven in Norwegian marble and steatite. The other is a simple cabinet of marblelized wood to assure the symmetry of the room.

To the right of the Garden Room opens the Monkey Room, a small reception hall in exquisite Pompeiian style. The monkey is a life-size portrait of an old family pet, painted directly onto a pier glass. From his perch, the monkey reaches into the fronds of one of four sculpted palm trees. These form the frame of the pier glass and Liselund's most striking trompe l'oeil. The painting shows the de la Calmette garden in Lisbon seen through a latticework of bamboo. This complicated decoration is a tribute to the monkey for saving the Ambassador from a nighttime conflagration at his residence in Portugal. The animal's screeching awakened the family in time to evacuate the burning house. Facing the hero and his trompe-l'oeil garden are again twin oval mirrors and corbels with antique decorations. These match the Wedgwood-style medallions on the remaining walls. To complete the antique impression, the stove is disguised as an Etruscan urn. Opposite it is an exact copy.

Liselund palace was built for entertaining and, logically, the dining room was given a central place in the design of the palace. The entire back wing of Liselund is given over to this most Classical room. The cool, stately interior has been divided up into piers flanked by trompe l'oeil Ionic pilasters, marbled pale cream. The piers are marbled black and carry pier glasses and corbels. Five large French doors admit the warm greens of the surrounding gardens that brighten the room. The pine floor is painted to resemble black and white tiles, a tradition since the Baroque era. The dining-room furniture is in a simplified Louis XVI style with



The Baroness's bedroom contains furniture carved of beech and fir wood.

painted rather than carved decorations. This subdued treatment was meant to enhance and not distract from the impact of the severe architectural decorations. The Iselin family's East Indian procelain service was used exclusively at Liselund. Baroness Lisa felt the family crest and floral decoration of the specially ordered service suitable to the summer retreat. The table ornaments and candelabra were imported from France.

The last room on the main floor is Baroness Lisa's bedchamber. Similar in proportion to the Monkey Room, the bedroom is more simply treated. The walls are solid brick-red in color. Two built-in closets add architectural interest to the room and form an alcove for the Baroness's bed. One closet conceals the commode and a passage to the Baron's bedroom. Both doors to the closets are painted with a trompe l'oeil of torchères bearing flower arrangements. The queen, Juliane Marie, died just as Liselund neared completion and most of the linen for the house was bought at the auction of her household goods. The canopy for the Baroness's bed, however, was especially ordered of fine linen huckaback. The Baroness also kept the draperies at Liselund as simple as possible to emphasize the architectural decorations. The bare floors were a reminder of the bucolic setting of Liselund.

Although it was the center of their summer entertainments, the Baron and Baroness never considered Liselund anything more than a summer pavilion. With only eleven bedrooms, it could not accommodate the family, its friends and staff. The de la Calmettes retained a French butler, a second butler, a secretary, a gamekeeper, a groom, two lackeys, a cook, two kitchenmaids, two chambermaids, and the Baron's old nurse—a staff that could only be fitted in at the Marienborg castle. As a summer retreat, Liselund was occupied only a few weeks at a time when the family could rough it.

Not until the de la Calmettes' son, Charles, married did the palace become a proper home. Charles married a commoner, Martha Mackeprang, much against his parents' wishes. He brought his bride to Liselund, which was close to her family and a distance from his parents. Charles inherited the entire holdings of the de la Calmettes early in the nineteenth century. Lacking his parents' practical genius, he died bankrupt at forty, in 1820. The family's town house and four estates were sold at auction to cover Charles's debts. Liselund was purchased by the Rosenkrantz family, which permitted "Aunt Calmette" to stay on at the palace. During her 57 years of widowhood Lady Martha maintained Liselund as her husband had left it. Her only additions were a collection of white poultry and snowy peafowls. Her weakness for white included an albino roe, which calmly followed Lady Martha on walks through the gardens.

Baroness Calmette clung to her memories, and upon her death in 1877 she left a perfectly preserved eighteenth-century interior to the Rosenkrantzes. Her eccentricities never allowed the furniture to be rearranged or a detail to be altered. The Rosenkrantz family used the palace only ten years, then moved to a new castle they constructed elsewhere on the estate. Today, the Baron Rosenkrantz heads a board of directors that protects the Liselund palace and gardens—now a listed national cultural landmark—as Denmark's most perfectly preserved Neoclassic milieu.

In the park at Liselund, at the Baroness Lisa's favorite resting spot, the Baron Antoine erected a monument to his wife that captures the spirit of the romantic age and the tenor of the place. On a stone pillar the Baron placed a marble relief of only two of the three Graces. Below them he carved, *"Elles attendent icy Leur sœur."*

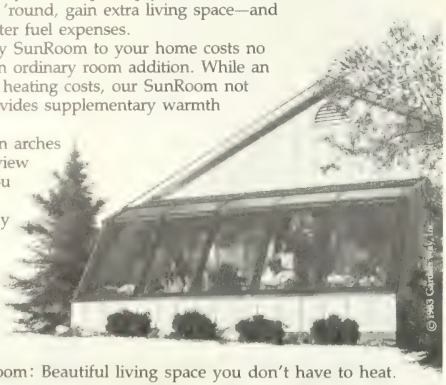
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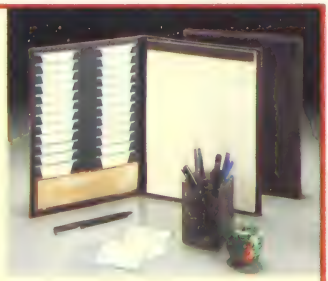
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FRIDA KAHLO

(Continued from page 105) watermelons entitled *Viva la Vida* (Long Live Life) expresses her abiding *alegría* and philosophy. Other rooms contain some of the Riveras' extensive collection of pre-Columbian idols and artifacts, along with paintings by Rivera, by friends—Marcel Duchamp, Yves Tanguy—or by artists they admired like José María Velasco and Paul Klee.

Clearly the Riveras' taste in people and art was cosmopolitan. Just as clearly their taste in furnishings was not. They shared with many artists and intellectuals of post-revolutionary Mexico a passion for their native heritage, so much so that their home is almost a museum of popular art. Many examples of their collections of over one thousand *retablos* (small votive paintings on tin) hang in the stairway that leads to Frida's studio. Frida stuffed her closet with exquisite costumes from various regions of Mexico, most of them, like those on display, from the isthmus of Tehuantepec. She wore these clothes daily, even in Paris and New York; in those cities, the costumed Frida, with her fierce dark eyes set in a nearly beautiful face, seemed so exotic that she stopped traffic.

Hanging in many corners of the house are Judas monsters and papier-mâché skeletons. To the Riveras, these creations were not only amusing, they were, Frida insisted, works of art rivaling those of her friend Picasso. The skeleton Judas that Frida kept on top of her bed's canopy (and that she depicted in a painting called *The Dream*) shocked some visitors, but Rivera, with his own brand of mordant wit, explained it away: he said that the skeleton was his wife's lover.

The dining room and kitchen most vibrantly express the Riveras' "Mexieanista" spirit. Following a provincial Mexican tradition, Frida and Diego covered the kitchen walls with bright ceramic tile. Even the cooking range is decked in yellow and blue *azulejos*, and on it are set immense pots for preparing *mole*, as well as other clay pots made in Puebla. In an especially folkloric touch, the names "Frida" and "Diego" are spelled out by a multitude of tiny clay mugs hanging on the wall.

In the dining room, where the Riveras entertained their closest friends, the table and cupboards, obviously the type of cheap, brightly painted furni-

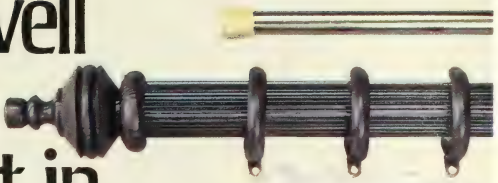
ture that anyone can buy in a Mexican market, attest again to the Riveras' feeling of solidarity with the people of Mexico. Their meals shared the same spirit; they ate native dishes, using earthenware crockery. Everywhere around them were handcraft items: wonderfully grotesque carved wooden masks, one showing a man with what looks like a mouse in his mouth, a horse and rider and a Mexican eagle made of woven straw, Judases watching from their stations on the walls. Several naïvely painted Mexican still lifes from the nineteenth century are fitting décor for a dining room.

Occasionally these folk-art objects have a particular significance. On a shelf, for example, sit two ceramic clocks from La Luz, Puebla, decorated with pairs of doves labeled "Frida" and "Diego." On the face of one clock, Frida wrote *Se Rompieron las Horas,* (colloquially, Time Stopped Here). She also inscribed the date, September 1939. This was the month when, to her profound sorrow, she and Rivera started divorce proceedings. On the face of the other clock, Frida commemorated the day and place of their remarriage: "In San Francisco, December 8, '40 at eleven."

Friends recall that the Riveras' meals were as colorful and informal as the surroundings. On a table covered with fruit and fresh flowers, they would build a maze for their smallest parrot, Bonito. He would stagger through it with his pigeon-toed gait until he finally reached his prize—butter. Other first-time guests were greatly surprised when pet spider monkeys suddenly would land on their heads; what Fulang-Chang and his cohorts were after was not attention, but bananas.

It might seem unusual for a master bedroom to give onto a dining room, but that is exactly what *el maestro* Diego's does, and quite appropriately, given the 300-pound Rivera's incorrigible love of food. Here, above the bureau, hangs a painting of a voluptuous nude, testimony to another of Rivera's gargantuan appetites. Beside the bureau, on a stand, are two straw hats, a hard hat, plus Rivera's leather work satchel, all of which reinforce the proletarian image that Rivera affected. Despite his thorough academic training and fourteen years spent in Europe, the muralist liked to see *(Continued on page 162)*

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This place was Frida Kahlo's setting and frame; it was part of her self-invention as a flamboyant, mythic, and utterly Mexican creature, the perfect accompaniment to her equally fabulous husband

(Continued from page 161) himself as a "worker among workers." His big Stetson hat, the one in which he portrayed himself in 1926 in his mural at the Ministry of Education and in which he posed for the American photographer Edward Weston, hangs from another rack. Slung over a hook are his enormous overalls, big enough for two people, and on a chair, side by side, are his mammoth black miner's shoes.

In 1946, as Frida was becoming more and more ill, Rivera designed and built a new wing to give his wife space for a proper studio and a bedroom on the same floor so that she would not have to walk up and down stairs. In the studio is her Winsor & Newton easel, said to be a gift from Nelson Rockefeller, and drawn up before it is the wheelchair in which she spent so much time in the last years of her life. There, on her work table, is the mirror to which she turned and turned again as she painted the long series of self-portraits for which she is renowned.

Frida's bed stands in a narrow hallway with glass doors that open onto the garden. Bedridden at the end of her life, she asked to be moved to this room so that she could watch pigeons outside, see the light shift, and enjoy the view of rain falling on the garden's lush tropical foliage. The fourposter itself testifies to her heroism in the face of pain, albeit in a somewhat macabre way. On the underside of the canopy is the mirror that enabled her to paint self-portraits while confined to bed, and, placed in the middle of the bed, as if the bed were a throne, is one of the many plaster corsets that Frida needed to support her deteriorating vertebrae. She called the corsets a "martyrdom," and this one tells us why. Indeed, it brings to mind one of Frida Kahlo's most astonishing self-portraits, *The Broken Column* (1944), in which she painted herself with nails driven into her flesh and her torso cracked open to reveal a broken Ionic column in the place of her own broken backbone. Down the middle of the plaster corset in the museum, Frida painted a crumbling marble column, and, probably in a moment of black humor, she stuck yellow thumbtacks into the plaster to suggest, like the nails in the self-portrait, points of pain. Over Frida's bed hangs a traditional nineteenth-century post-mortem portrait of a dead child. If that seems an odd choice for a bedroom, we should remember that Frida painted the same subject in one of her best known works, *The Deceased Dimas* (1937). No doubt the theme of dead children interested her because her pelvis crushed in the accident prevented her from ever bearing a child. Next to her bed, a doll's bed and a selection from the artist's large doll collection tells us, like many of her paintings, how much she longed for motherhood.

Similarly, the corner room, which was Frida's bedroom from 1946 until her last months, bears eloquent witness to Frida's thwarted desire for a child. In a glass case is Diego Rivera's baptismal dress, with three small dolls pinned to the white lace. A large armoire is crammed with dolls, doll furniture, and countless other little objects that friends brought back to Frida from their travels. "I love things," Frida once said. "One day I'm going to be a little old woman and I'll go around my house fixing up my things." For Frida, these little things, these souvenirs of other people's journeys, could trigger her own fantasies and thus offer a form of vicarious travel.

Also in this bedroom is a second fourposter, which was occupied by friends from time to time until, at the end of Frida's life, her nurse took it over. It is as bizarre and theatrical as Frida's paintings: against the footboard lean her crutches; a Judas skeleton and glass balls dangle from the canopy; and on the canopy's underside is affixed a box of butterflies, a gift from the sculptor Isamu Noguchi. An embroidered pillow, possibly Frida's handwork for she was deft with a needle, shows a popular Mexican image—two angels holding red cords that suspend a flaming human heart, the Sacred Heart of Christ. One can imagine Frida's mischievous chuckle when she lay this strange valentine pillow on the bed; following the same Roman Catholic iconographical tradition, she depicted her own extracted heart in paintings that treat not Christian fervor, but the theme of suffering in love. Embroidered on the pillow slip are the words *Despierta Corazón Dormido* (Awake Sleeping Heart), words that had special significance for Frida Kahlo.

Her own "awakened heart"—her famous *alegría,* her passion for life, her endurance of pain—is evident in every corner of the house. This place was Frida Kahlo's setting and frame; it was part of her self-invention as a flamboyant mythic and utterly Mexican creature, the perfect accompaniment to her equally fabulous husband with his paint-bespattered overalls and his gun belt stretching around his vast waist. Because she was an invalid, the Coyoacán house was her world; she cared passionately about its every detail. An excellent housewife, Frida took pride in running her home with precision and flair. Its beauty was crucial to her; she wanted her house to make each day more comfortable and enjoyable for Diego Rivera, who was the pivot of her life. Her table was set to be a feast for her husband's eye as well as for his palate. Just as she transformed herself into an art object for his pleasure, she made her house into a work of art that would enrich his life. Full of wit, color, exuberance, and, of course, pain, the Frida Kahlo Museum is like Frida Kahlo's paintings: it illustrates and makes vivid the lives of the two extraordinary painters who called it home. □

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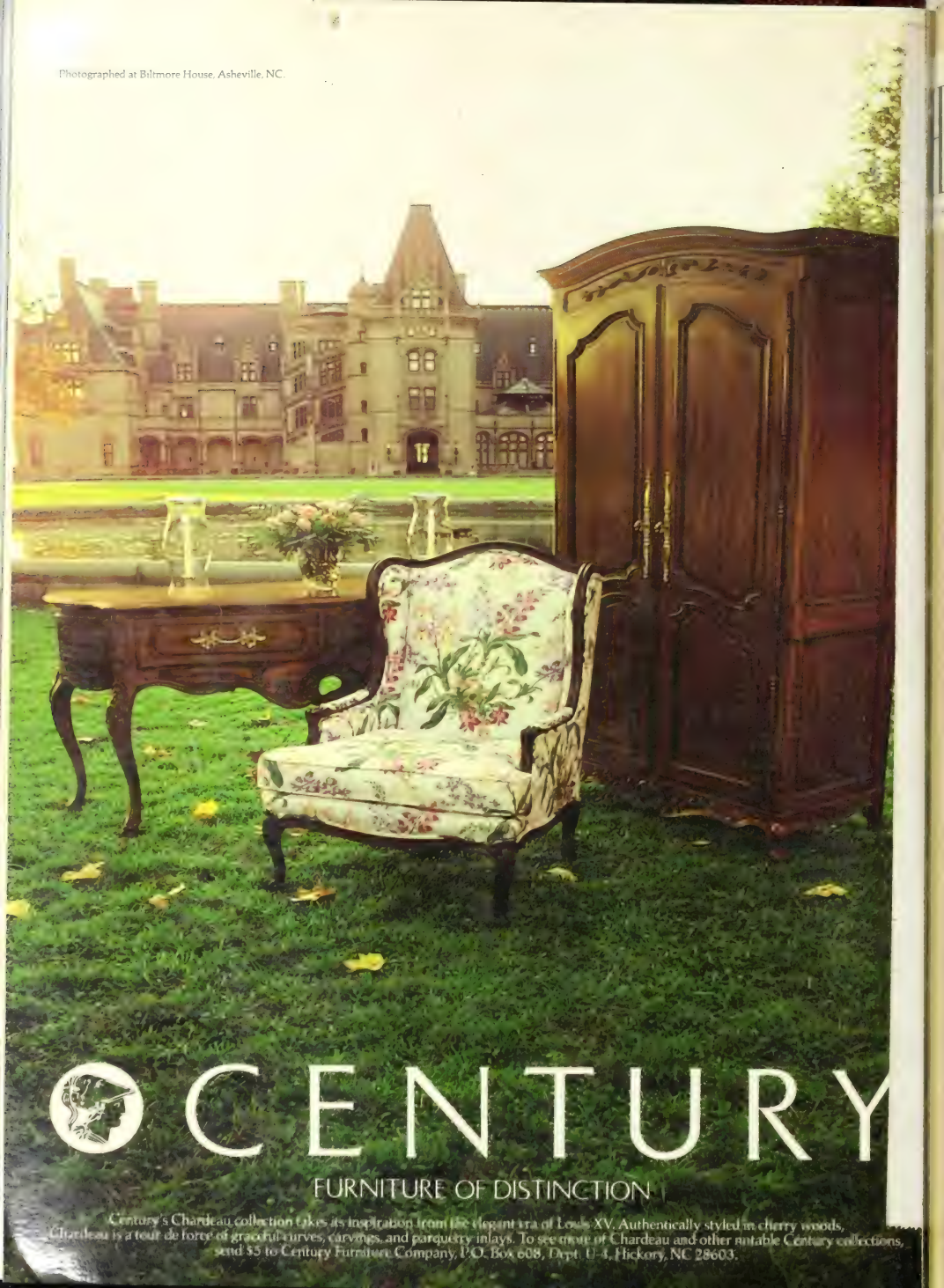


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Philadelphia Dressing Table. Philadelphia, circa 1769. Crafted in mahogany, this reproduction is a masterpiece of highly carved Chippendale design. The table features large areas of delicate carvings, with the legs terminating in typical Philadelphia ball-and-claw feet. The original is displayed in the Port Royal Parlor

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THE LION HUNTRESS

Bossy and talented, Lady Colefax excelled at party-giving and decorating in London between the wars

By John Richardson

If the tasteful look of English country houses—compounded of relaxed elegance and benign neglect—continues to find favor on either side of the Atlantic, this is largely due to the firm of Colefax and Fowler, which breathed new life into a style that goes back two hundred years to the period of England's Enlightenment: the Grand Whiggery. The debt that some of America's most prestigious decorators owe this firm is no secret. Indeed John Fowler is a name to conjure with. But how about Sibyl Colefax, who founded the business?

In her heyday, from 1925–45, Lady Colefax was far better known—primarily as a hostess—than John Fowler, the man who later became her partner. But posterity has readjusted the record and her reputation has fallen victim to the oblivion that descends on hostesses when they stop entertaining, or die. A recent book by Brian Masters, *Great Hostesses* (Constable, London, 1982), has rescued this risible figure from oblivion, if not quite from obloquy. For all her pushiness, Sibyl Colefax was a catalyst who did much to promote international relations, English literature, interior decoration, and not least herself.

As a rule, ladies who feel the need to prove themselves socially hail from backgrounds *they* regard as dim or humble or shameful; or they suffer from some other taint they have to mesmerise or bludgeon society into overlooking or accepting. Sibyl Colefax typified this syndrome. Her background was respectable but dreary; she lacked fortune, looks, wit, and charm, particularly by comparison with her principal London rival, the Californian Lady Cunard. Moreover she could be quite vindictive; as the late Kenneth



A rare snap of Lady Colefax

Clark wrote, if "thwarted—a guest fell out at the last moment or a celebrity left early—[Lady Colefax] would suffer a physical change, and the upper part of her face would turn black. She literally gave one a black look, and it was very alarming." A further disadvantage was her husband, an eminent patent lawyer, who, as [the American diarist] Chips Channon wrote, was "deaf, and unfortunately the very reverse of dumb . . . boring beyond belief."

Besides the bossiness and thick, snub-proof skin that a hostess as ambitious and professional as Lady Colefax is obliged to develop, Sybil had two advantages that she exploited to the full. Firstly, "artistic" taste, which manifested itself in close friendships with Bernard Berenson and Kenneth Clark; her determination to make museum directors smart; and in the stylish decoration of her successive salons. Secondly, considerable literary discernment, which was reflected in her choice of such lions as H.G. Wells, Max Beerbohm, Somerset Maugham, the Sitwells (until Osbert ratted on her), T.S. Eliot, and Christopher Isherwood. In the field of letters, her most surprising catch was the hypercritical Virginia Woolf, who began by complaining that Sibyl was silly, hard, shiny, and "glittering as a cheap cherry," but eventually accepted her as a kind and loyal friend—if only to the stars. Sibyl was too consummate a snob to pick her lions for mere rank.

One of Sibyl's consistently endearing traits was a passion for Americans. After visiting the United States in 1926, she returned to London with scores of American scalps dangling from her belt, those of Alexander Woollcott, Thornton Wilder, Anita Loos, and Condé Nast, in particular. Regarding this new passion, Aldous Huxley—who drew on her quirks for the tuft-hunting hostess in his novel, *Those Barren Leaves*—reported that Sybil's attentions had reduced Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford "to the verge of the tomb." Still it must be admitted that most of her American prey took her to their hearts, and Brian Masters is right to claim *(Continued on page 14)*

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(Continued from page 12) that 'Lady Colefax's greatest contribution, deserving of a firm place in the social history of the twentieth century, was to bring Americans to an English drawing room. Whatever her motives, she considered it her duty to narrow the Atlantic."

Three years later, Sibyl's American connections were almost her undoing when the savings that she had transferred, on the advice of a New York friend, from London to Wall Street evaporated in the crash. Meanwhile deafness obliged her hitherto well-paid husband to retire from legal practice. Poverty prompted Sibyl to harness her gift for doing up houses to her incomparable social contacts and go into business as a decorator. The new venture was probably inspired by the example of her next-door-neighbor-but-one, Syrie Maugham, who was an old hand at this game. Unfortunately Syrie, too, needed cash to replenish Wall Street losses and to eke out what she regarded as a none-too-generous divorce settlement. How dare Sibyl poach on her preserves? Mutual friends derived fiendish fun from the un-ladylike recriminations of these fashionable shopkeepers.

Although Syrie Maugham is credited with being an innovative decorator, she had in fact pinched her principal gimmick—the all-white look—from an *à la page* friend, Mrs. Winkie Philipson. According to Somerset Maugham, his wife cooked accounts and peddled fakes. According to Cecil Beaton, "she bleached, pickled, or scraped every piece of furniture in sight. White sheepskin rugs were strewn on the eggshell-surfaced floors, vast white sofas were flanked with crackled white incidental tables, white ostrich and peacock feathers were put in white vases against white walls.... It was unearthly.... Mayfair drawing rooms began to look like albino stage sets. The craze wasn't to subside for a decade, whereupon Mrs. Maugham switched gears and introduced the vivid colors of a lobster salad." Much to the relief of her clients, I may say, for white-on-white was impractical and costly to maintain, requiring constant cleaning and repainting. Moreover Mrs. Maugham wouldn't countenance the inclusion of her clients' family things, unless mahogany chairs or gilded consoles were subjected to a lot of vandalistic sizing and whitening.

Sibyl was far more practical and accommodating. Thanks to her eminent friends in the art world, she had acquired too much reverence for the artifacts of the past to want to tamper with them. And far from imposing a specific modish look, she was content to work within the eclectic tradition of the English country house. At the same time she realized her limitations and was wise enough to widen the scope of her new venture by roping in a couple of younger society women who had at least as much flair as herself: the American-born Mrs. Ronald Tree (subsequently Mrs. Nancy Lancaster), to buy stock and come up with new ideas; and Countess (Peggy) Münster, to help drum up trade and keep an eye on things while her boss relentlessly compiled guest lists. Sibyl could not have chosen better: both women had superb houses and gardens to their credit (the former at Kelmarsh and Ditchley, the latter at Schloss Wasserleonburg and Send Grove), for which they were—indeed, still are—admired.

In 1938 the three women were joined by John Fowler, a young man who had abandoned the life of a farmer's boy for a career painting furniture, first in the Peter Jones department store, then in his own house a stone's throw from Sibyl's. According to John Cornforth (*Country Life*, April 28 and May 19, 1983), both Sibyl and Syrie were after John Fowler, but he chose Lady Colefax "because he thought her the less dominating personality.... [At first] it was not an easy arrangement because there was *au fond* little sympathy between them, although later they became fond of each other." Although Fowler seemed retiring and easy-going, his shyness concealed a will of iron. This was sometimes difficult to equate with the way he radiated a sweetness and coziness and the style he called "humble elegance," which lightened up the conventional ladylike look that was Sibyl's stock-in-trade. For although Fowler had taught himself the sumptuous techniques of eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century decoration, his own taste gravitated toward the more modest manifestations of the Regency and William IV styles, which he dubbed, somewhat condescendingly, "P.P.F." (Poor People's Furniture). Fowler's work is already vanishing, so it is fortunate that in partnership with John Cornforth he published the fruits of a lifetime's research before he died. *English Decoration in the Eighteenth Century* tells us all we need to know about everything from gauffrage to gimp.

After Fowler's arrival, Sibyl Colefax did less decorating, but continued with the entertaining, which provided Colefax and Fowler with a steady stream of clients. As Brian Masters says, "Lady Colefax the hostess and Lady Colefax the businesswoman overlapped and complemented each other." Indeed Sibyl pioneered the use of social connections as bait to catch upwardly mobile people who expected a decorator to provide not only a smart new dining room but also smart new friends to fill it. Anyone who purchased enough lime-green sofas stood a chance of being pointed in the right direction and introduced to some of Sibyl's lesser nobs. She has had many imitators.

Sibyl reached her apogee in the mid-thirties. By assiduously cultivating Mrs. Simpson, she managed to entice the Prince of Wales to her parties, and she is even said to have entertained the absurd fantasy of acting as a peacemaker between Mrs. Simpson and Queen Mary. When Wales became king, Sibyl made her shop available for clandestine trysts. Mrs. Simpson would come in the front door and fiddle with fringe until the monarch, wearing a boater, would materialize via the back door. And then when the cost of living, or rather entertaining, obliged her to sell Argyll House—Leone's eighteenth-century gem on the corner of Oakley Street and the King's Road—and move to smaller quarters in Westminster, Sibyl decided that her swan song should be a carefully orchestrated dinner for the king and the woman she was convinced would be queen. *(Continued on page 16)*

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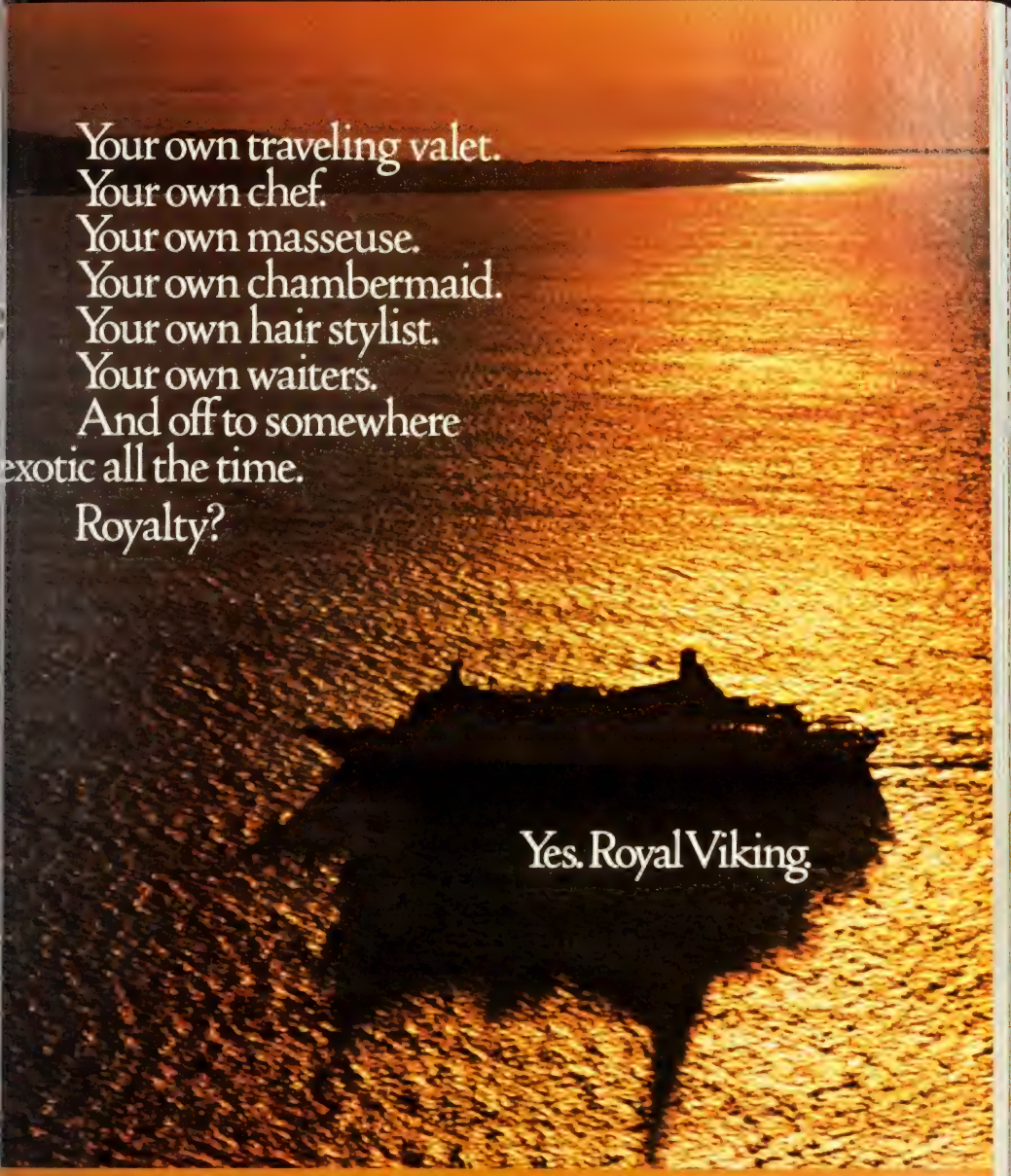
(Continued from page 14) According to Kenneth Clark, who was one of the guests, the dinner was very nearly a disaster. Arthur Rubinstein, who had been pressed against his will to play some Chopin, announced a barcarole. As the piece proceeded the king looked irritated and continued talking. Finally he said, "That isn't the one we like," meaning that it wasn't the hackneyed intermezzo from Offenbach's *Tales of Hoffmann*. Rubinstein then played a Chopin prelude. The king rose to leave. "It was 10:15. Consternation. Sibyl on the verge of tears." The evening was saved only when Noël Coward "put his artistic scruples in his pocket" and played "Mad Dogs and Englishmen." The king returned to the drawing room and stayed to a late hour.

People differed as to how loyal Sibyl was to the Windsors after the abdication, not, however, with the satirist who wrote: "The ladies Colefax and Cunard took it very, very hard."

Although reduced in influence and affluence—her new house was tiny—she continued to deluge people with invitations of which as many as fifty, all quite illegible except for the hour and the day, would be dashed off before breakfast. With age she, too, dwindled. Toward the end of the war, I would see her at first nights, doubled over like one of Saul Steinberg's anthropomorphic question marks, waiting impatiently for the curtain to come down so that she could badger any halfway celebrated member of the audience into attending her "Ordinaries." These were the dinners at the Dorchester Hotel, which a diminishing income and the war had obliged her to put on a paying basis: half a guinea a head. Everybody claimed to loathe these functions but everybody went, not least because Sibyl succeeded in browbeating so many Americans of distinction—Walter Lippmann, Averell Harriman, the Lunts—into taking part. For the war had finally enabled Lady Colefax to fulfill her lifelong ambition of narrowing the Atlantic Ocean.

As for Colefax and Fowler, shortly after the war Sibyl sold her interest to Nancy Lancaster, and as soon as rationing and postwar shortages permitted, the decorating business took on a new lease on life. London residences that had been blitzed or neglected, country houses that had been requisitioned by the military or some other authority were all in dire need of decoration. Colefax and Fowler came to the rescue of those who could afford them. And the working rapport that developed between Nancy Lancaster, with her Virginian panache and transatlantic notions of modern comfort, and John Fowler, with his taste, his knowhow, and his eighteenth-century sense of color, enabled the fabric of English country house life to regain much of its past splendor. □





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A VOCABULARY OF TASTE

Words without parallel in the West reveal Japan's special attitude toward style

By Donald Richie

Some years back an attempt was made to introduce the Japanese aesthetic term *shibui* into American advertising parlance. There was a *shibui* dress design, a *shibui* look to your guest room, and a *shibui* necktie. Such are, I suppose, possible, but only if you know what you are doing. The perpetrators did not. Last heard of, *shibui* had taken its noun form, *shibumi,* and become the title of a popular novel which had nothing to do with any of the qualities the title evoked.

This is too bad, because America needs words for such concepts. Having the word one could then enjoy the concept. Actually, *shibui* means astringent, but pleasantly so, like a persimmon or a lemon. An extension is that the *shibui* is sober but elegant, plain but distinctive. A *shibui* kimono, for example, is of a single color with just the hint of a contrasting shade—a blackish-greenish garment perhaps, lined with a coral silk barely visible at neckline and sleeve. This being so, the dictionary gives one final definition: "severe good taste," whether evidenced in dress, house, or garden—the kind of good taste we call quiet but distinctive.

How handy this term in English would be—just one word for all those many. Its failure to enter the language was no fault of its own. It was simply never properly defined.

In thinking over this failure, and the language's continued need, I wondered if, properly defined, several other convenient Japanese aesthetic terms could not after all weather the change and enrich the American language.



Sabi: designer jeans could be considered *sabi.*

If so, I would first nominate *jimi.* The dictionary is of one mind about this term: it is "plain, simple, quiet, modest, unpretentious, sober." One sees its differences from *shibui. Jimi* can never be elegant, but it can be a number of other things. Yet what but *jimi* was the gray flannel suit, were those plain blouses and skirts that used to be considered so pleasantly unexceptional?

But, perhaps *jimi*'s time on the American scene is already past—the unexceptional seems to play small part in what American exceptionals call their lifestyles. If such be the case, I have then the perfect now and with-it aesthetic term.

This, the antonym of *jimi,* is *hadé.* Here, even the dictionary lets itself go. It is "showy, gaudy, vain, flashy, gorgeous," obviously just the term for American lifestyles. What the dictionary does not indicate, however, is its most precious property: *hadé* is not perjorative, as are its English synonyms. It is, in Japan, possible to be loud without being vulgar. A *hadé* kimono can be alive with clashing color, yet perfectly proper. A personality can be equally *hadé*—outgoing, bright, flashy, even outrageous, but with no hint of opprobrium. America needs a term such as this.

Continuing on, encouraged, one encounters the celebrated and infamous twins of Japanese terms aesthetic. These are *sabi* and *wabi*: celebrated because indispensable; infamous because of their being so notoriously difficult to define.

Here even the dictionary is uncertain. Both are rooted in words that mean "lonely" (*sabishi* and *wabishi,* respectively), but this is of small aesthetic assistance. Perhaps a history lesson will help.

It will be remembered that in the West, in the very midst of sentimental rococo excesses, the new classicism made its *(Continued on page 22)*

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GENEVE

(Continued from page 20) entrance. This occurred in many European countries and not for the first time. When things get just too frivolous a new sobriety comes into being.

This occurred earlier in Japan. The warlord Hideyoshi was constructing tea-ceremony rooms of pure gold. The temperature of the times was nothing if not *hadé*. It was Hideyoshi's arbiter on matters aesthetic, Sénno Rikyu, who took matters in hand and popularized a new sobriety, in which *wabi* and *sabi* played a large part.

A paradigm for the new attitude was Hideyoshi's visit to see Rikyu's celebrated garden of morning glories. When he arrived he discovered that they had all been uprooted. The disgruntled warrior repaired to the tea-room. There, in the alcove, in a common clay container, was one perfect morning glory.

How the ruler reacted to this lesson—less means more—is not recorded. Fulsomely chronicled is the general reaction: the new sobriety became the latest thing. Blossoms common as weeds were put in peasant pickled-plum pots and the *wabi-cha* style of *ikebana* was formed. Backed by a scroll consisting of lots of white space and a few perfectly placed lines, the result was terribly *sabi*. One is quite reminded of Marie Antoinette's Hameau with its real hay and real cows.

There was a catch, of course—there always is in Japanese aesthetics. These common little bowls, perhaps cheap enough at first, soon came to be—crafted by the most sensitive of potters—more expensive than anything Hideyoshi could have commissioned. The ostentatiousness of the unostentatious became the major *sabi/wabi* theme, and it still is. The West, sunk in frivolity, knows all about this, but it does not yet have a name for it. It yearns for the new sobriety but does not know what to call it. Here is where *sabi/wabi* are desperately needed. What, indeed, are designer jeans if not *sabi*—that unpleasant combination of the old, the sturdy, the proletariat, upgraded by expensive hands into the most unostentatiously ostentatious of objects? And, as for *wabi*, my nomination is Chanel's simple, basic, black frock. It is common but elegantly cut, in the most unexceptionable of colors, but the single one forever in fashion, it speaks of a lonely independence, and is inordinately expensive.

Sitting in one's Chanel, gazing at an arrangement of dandelions in a piece of battered Tupperware, one may now practice (the last term in today's lesson) *mono no aware*. This is not an attribute but an attitude—one, naturally, with a long and involved history.

For American purposes, however, it is sufficient to note that, in *The Tale of Genji* and before, its use signalizes a (dictionary term) "sensitivity to things," the things themselves being "things which move one." The awareness is highly self-conscious and what moves one is, in part, the awareness of being moved, and the mundane quality of the things doing the moving. Here



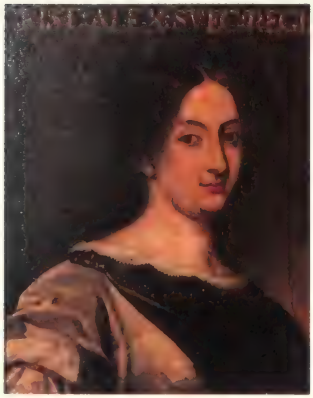
Wabi: a simple black Chanel dress would be very *wabi*.

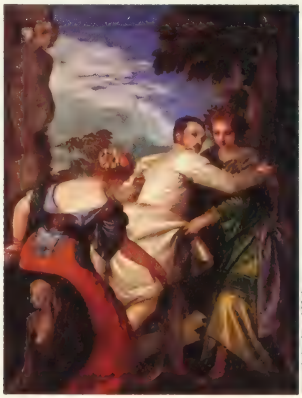
we are again close to *wabi* because it is the spectacle of quotidian life itself that comprises the view. The mutability of all things, their transience—life is a stream down which one glides and this is both pleasantly melancholy and, at the same time, terribly human. *Mono no aware* implies resignation but, at the same time, it occasions a small celebration of this attitude. And here is where America's need for such a term occurs. You look into the mirror and find one more line, one more gray hair. *Mono no aware* does *not* consist of picking up the phone and making an appointment at the beauty parlor. Rather, it consists of smiling gently at one's reflection and thinking: "Ah, *mono no aware*. Things are going as they must . . . and therefore should."

If America has this real need for Japanese autos, transistors, computers, and it seems it does, how much more real its need for Japanese aesthetic terms to really define how it is feeling. □



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QUEEN CHRISTINA

She gave up the throne of Sweden and made the arts and letters flourish in seventeenth-century Rome

By Francis Haskell

Above left: Christina of Sweden, early seventeenth century, Uffizi Gallery. *Above right: Allegory of Virtue and Vice (The Choice of Hercules)*, about 1650, by Veronese, Frick Collection.

The secret conversion to Catholicism, the abdication from the throne, and the subsequent arrival in Rome of Christina of Sweden (daughter of Gustavus Adolphus, the great scourge of Catholicism) astounded her seventeenth-century contemporaries fully as much as it has intrigued historians, novelists, and filmmakers ever since. But her residence in Rome from 1655, when she was 29, until her death in 1689 (with frequent absences abroad during the first ten years or so) could be as disconcerting as it was—at first—welcome to her hosts. All visitors commented on her strange manners and even stranger appearance: "She is a Woman but of low stature, yet of very manly Countenance," wrote an Englishman a few years after her arrival in Rome. "I remember she had on her a Velvet Jerkin, with a Red sattin petticoate layd all about with white lace, and little buttons in every seame where the lace went, with a Blacke scarfe about her necke, and a Blacke hood, with a great lace on it, upon her head."

But the problems she caused were more serious than any infringement of conventional decorum. Her craving for real power and conspicuous status was not diminished by her abdication, and she made it clear to successive popes that her own authority was to be considered hardly, if at all, inferior to theirs; her sexual and political intrigues, both domestic and foreign, outraged a society that was certainly not unduly censorious in such matters; she was accused of murder, and she certainly gave protection to criminals of all kinds. Yet she was a woman of wit, intelligence, learning, imagination, and culture, whose patronage of artists and writers played a significant role in transforming Roman life in the second half of the seventeenth century.

In Stockholm she had discussed philosophy with her guest Descartes (at five o'clock in the morning two or three days a week—in January), corresponded with scholars all over Europe, added to the superb collection of paintings that had been looted from Prague by the Swedish army, and built a fine library and medal cabinet. All these interests remained with her and found even greater scope in Rome.

From 1659 she was established in the Palazzo Riario at the base of the Janiculum adjoining the Tiber: the palace was subsequently incorporated into the Palazzo Corsini and as it is now the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica the rooms in which she lived and died can easily be visited. But her spectacular collections have been dispersed throughout the world.

When Christina left Sweden she was able to remove her favorite pictures. She did not bother with the "works by Albrecht Dürer and other German masters whose names I do not know but who would arouse the most profound admir- *(Continued on page 26)*

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Her real importance was that of an impresario. She brought together nearly all the leading scholars, scientists and artists, poets, musicians, and thinkers of her day

(Continued from page 24) ation of anyone except myself . . . I declare that I would exchange them all for two Raphaels and I think that even this would be doing them too much honor," but she took some eighty Italian pictures, and acquired others on her journey, and these included masterpieces by Correggio (The *Danaë,* now in the Villa Borghese, and the *Leda,* now in Berlin), Titian (the *Three Ages of Man* and the *Venus Anadyomene* now on loan to Edinburgh, and the *Diana Pursuing Actaeon,* now in London), and Veronese (the *Allegories,* now in the Frick Collection and in London). Such beautiful pictures, and many more of equal quality, would make an amazing impact anywhere. In late-seventeenth-century Rome, they were potentially of particular importance because so few paintings by these artists could be seen in the city. It very often happens that the presence in new surroundings of unfamiliar masterpieces stimulates local artists to creative emulation: such had certainly been the case in Rome a generation or so earlier, when the impact of Titian's mythologies from Ferrara had given birth to a great flowering of art. But, with rare exceptions, Queen Christina's Venetian pictures (to which she was able to make striking additions) produced sadly little effect, though she herself was certainly keen to patronize modern art. However, as the leading artists were working for the Pope, her opportunities for influencing them and for acquiring important works were somewhat limited; and as she is reported generally to have "preferred the old," it is not clear how much sympathy she felt with recent developments. It is true that she professed the very highest regard for the greatest artist of the age, Bernini, and that after his death she commissioned a biography of him; and it is likely (but not certain) that she owned many drawings by him, but the only sculpture of his that she possessed was his very last work, a *Salvator Mundi,* which he left to her in his will after she had refused to accept it as a gift, because she could think of nothing good enough to give him in exchange. As she was not usually so tactful, it is legitimate to entertain doubts about her enthusiasm for this greatest master of the Baroque.



Above: Correggio's *Danaë,* circa 1530, Borghese Gallery, Rome.

Fortunately there was at least one contemporary artist for whom she felt genuine enthusiasm. Pier Francesco Mola is among the most delicate and lyrical of all seventeenth-century painters, and he shared Christina's admiration for Venetian art. In the *Bacchus and Ariadne,* one of his loveliest pictures of which he painted at least two versions (Brunswick Museum and Wilton House, Wiltshire), he paid direct tribute to one of the Queen's Titians by adapting figures from the *Three Ages of Man.* Her superb Correggios proved less fruitful: one connoisseur scornfully dismissed them as "womanly," and Francesco Trevisani, the most important painter of the end of the century, formed his slightly anemic (though accomplished) style by copying them as a youth.

Although her tastes were wide (she owned works by Rubens and putative Caravaggios), Queen Christina made it clear that she considered Raphael to be the greatest of all painters, and while in Rome she added works by him (including the predella panels of the *Colonna Madonna,* now in New York) to those, both true and false, which she already possessed, and she even planned a "Raphael room" in her palace. This classicizing taste was confirmed, and no doubt also abetted, by her appointment of the extremely important theorist Giovan Pietro Bellori as her librarian and antiquarian. Backed by the prestige that came with this post he strenuously advocated adherence to the absolute authority of High Renaissance art in Rome and thus profoundly affected art both there and in Paris and elsewhere for more than a century.

Bellori also supervised Queen Christina's attempts to build up a great collection of Classical antiquities. No artistic enterprise attracted her more, but in none did she seem to have less success. Contemporaries report her excavating in vain for those treasures of antique statuary that had long been a necessary adornment of all Roman palaces and villas.

Eventually she was rewarded. She was able to buy from a sixteenth-century collection eight heavily restored *Muses.* To accompany this incomplete set she commissioned an *Apollo* from a little-known sculptor and displayed the group in a special room, lavishly hung with draperies. More striking were the *Castor and Pollux,* which had belonged to the Ludovisi family and which she bought partly to prevent them leaving Rome, and a rather mutilated figure dug up during the building of a new road and which, after being very imaginatively and skillfully "restored," became famous and copied throughout the world as the *Queen of Sweden's Faun.* Both statues, like the rest of her ancient sculptures, were eventually acquired by the king of Spain and are now in Madrid.

But to gauge the status of Queen Christina's patronage merely by commenting on some of the most important paintings *(Continued on page 28)*

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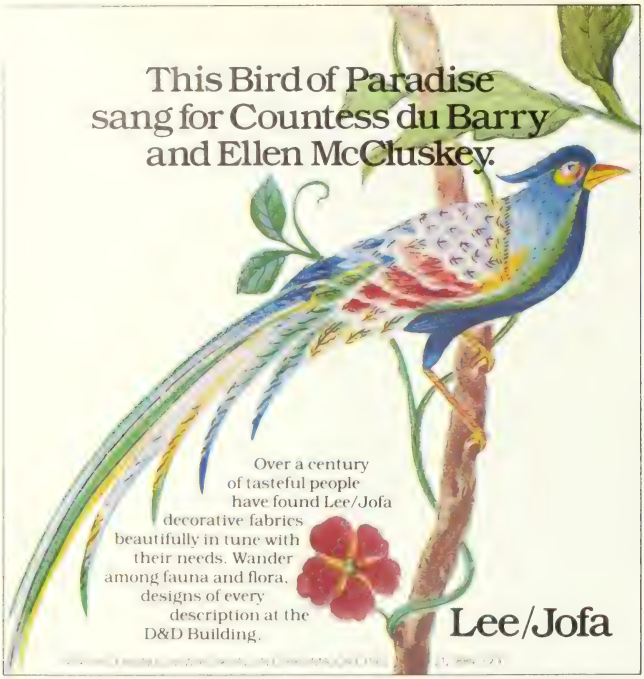
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(Continued from page 26) and sculptures—or drawings, books, and medals—in her possession would give a misleading impression, however magnificent, of her significance in this respect. Her real importance was that of an impresario. She brought together nearly all the leading scholars, scientists and artists, poets, musicians, and thinkers of her day. She organized concerts, theatrical performances, and operas. And, above all, this queen (who liked to have herself portrayed as Minerva) presided over a literary academy in her palace for which very great claims have been made. Although it has, in fact, recently been pointed out that this "Royal Academy" did not (as used to be assumed) give rise directly to the "Arcadian Academy," which dominated Italian literary life throughout the eighteenth century, it certainly did inaugurate the most important reform associated with it. In the discussions of the "Royal Academy," the "masters of true eloquence of the centuries of Augustus and Leo X" were to be used as models and the "turgid and bombastic modern style" was to be avoided. That these discussions would appear to have been somewhat trivial and sterile, and that all too many writers were soon to show that simplicity was as open to abuse as any other literary style, is almost irrelevant in this context. In her magnificently decorated palace, surrounded by the leading figures of her time, this influential, selfish, capricious, stout woman (whose manly features became accentuated with age as tufts of hair began to sprout on her chin) struck what proved to be a devastating blow against the tortuous, convoluted, and mannered style that had so long dominated (and perhaps inhibited) Italian literature and thought. Such reunions must indeed have brought out the best in her patronage—and character: her wit and her charm, her astonishing range (she could speak virtually all the main European languages), her broad culture, her profound respect for learning and genius. During her later years, the patronage of the popes (to whom she caused so much trouble) was declining precipitously, and it fell to her to maintain the cultural prestige of Rome. She seized the opportunity with eagerness and carried out her self-appointed role with conspicuous success. □

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GONE WITH THE PRUNES

A Napa Valley native returns to find his roots have become newly chic

By William Hamilton

Famous Americans have been coming out of the sticks ever since the nation got started. In Hollywood and New York and Washington successful escapees sit on silk divans with city lights twinkling in the distance like applause and laugh about how ridiculous and pathetic the hick towns they escaped were. Small-minded, provincial, monotonous, and, worst of all, unbearably obscure, it seems as if these burgs are enough to drive anyone to wealth and fame.

Not every hopeful departure from Podunk winds up in the penthouse, of course. I remember how the worst boy in St. Helena, California, spent every waking hour getting awful enough to become a Hell's Angel. He cut the sleeves off his shirt and the fenders off his motorcycle. He lost a few teeth, got tattoos, and stopped washing. He cut school until they threw him out. He roared around town at night so you could continue to find him unbearable even when you couldn't see him.



Two rather rustic views of the Napa Valley, the way the author remembered it.

When he felt he was bad enough, he went to Oakland to join the most notorious lodge of the Hell's Angels motorcycle club. Who knows what happened when our small-town worst presented himself to the nationally ranked scum? Had he kept too many teeth? Bathed too recently, got the wrong tattoos? They beat him up and trashed his bike. The poor bastard had to suffer the hugest ignominy an escaping hick can know, returning to town on the bus.

Not long after this Icarus-like leap at glory, the oddest possible thing happened, not just to St. Helena, California, but the entirety of Napa County. Instead of producing a famous or notorious son or daughter, the place went ahead and *(Continued on page 34)*


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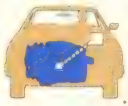
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Tempo's front-wheel-drive design not only delivers added tire-to-road traction, but provides precise handling and tight cornering.

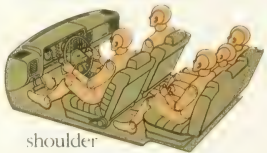
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Based on SAE standard J1349
*The above estimates are projected Ford ratings based on Ford Engineering test data, and are expected to be very close to official EPA ratings. Use for comparison. Your mileage may differ depending on speed, distance and weather. Actual highway mileage and California ratings will probably be lower. See your Ford Dealer for a copy of the Gas Mileage Guide when available.

Get it together–Buckle up.

Have you driven a Ford …lately?

Ford



(Continued from page 30) became famous itself.

Instead of, "Land o'goshen, whoever would have thunk that Eisenhower boy was going to amount to anything?" or, "Seems like but yesterday I was braiding that child's hair right on this here glider and now she's gone and won herself a Oscar," residents of the Napa Valley found themselves living in a celebrity. Somehow the stuff right under their noses, right under their feet, right before their very eyes went and got famous and beautiful and rich and adored. At a time when Pappy Eisen and Judge Vasconi, and Miss Ivy Loeber and the Turner sisters were remaining comfortably unspoken of, their home was beginning to be talked about on jet airplanes, in palaces, and at picnics next to rivers mentioned in the Bible.

Former locals who have managed to get to the silk divan with the twinkling lights like applause and tell people they are from the Napa Valley, get, instead of a wondrous glance expressing all they've accomplished, reactions like, "Oh how divine, lucky you—we adore the Napa Valley, but tell me, what on earth are you doing here when it's so much more beautiful there?" Instead of serving as the humble setting from which they've vaulted, god-like, to success, this particular rural origin upstages its own products.

The reasons this happened are more obvious to incoming visitors than emigrating natives. The incoming have the advantage of comparison. We just didn't know how pretty it was until we saw how plain the rest of the world was, and by then the land prices driven up by the incoming made Thomas Wolfe's spiritual injunction, "You can't go home again," a financial one as well.

My mother still looks up at the hills in the evening from her garden and says "It *is* beautiful," as if it's still a surprise. (She used to say the same thing to my father when I was small, only then she would say, "Oh Zand—it really is so beautiful—if only a giraffe would walk by," until he got the idea of buying her one and having it led by for an anniversary surprise. The giraffe



The prosperous iconography of the Napa Valley today.

really did look quite right in that setting of ancient oaks, tawny pink summer fields and forested hills, backlit by evening's soft light. But it ate too much.)

The physical beauty of the Napa Valley isn't new, but what's happened to the wine business is. Prunes and walnuts were almost as important crops as grapes in Napa County when I was walking through vineyards, trying to pretend they were Parisian avenues, dreaming of getting out. In those days wine wasn't called communist out loud by a country that felt beer was good enough, but it wasn't trusted much either. Americans knew it was drunk in Europe, and they knew Europe was a right strange place.

The people who lived in Napa County were a little strange then, too. Berets had been seen. One man was rumored to have been an interior decorator. A retired naval captain fell in love with and married his housekeeper when he found her on the kitchen table *in flagrante delicto* with his Phillipino houseboy. My father sent letters to the *St. Helena Star* recommending American elections be conducted with breakfast-cereal boxes: "The opposing candidates' faces might appear on each side of the box with their campaign buttons contained as prizes in the cereal, and the box top could be mailed in as a ballot."

Mount St. Helena (called by my letter-writing father "The Lady Lying Down") is what is left of a volcano that blew up in prehistory to form a lot of the valley. Flecks of black volcanic glass, obsidian, are strewn about like confetti from this old blast (some of which turns up fashioned into delicate arrowheads by victims of a later extinction). The ground is full of all sorts of exotic, volcanic magic: geysers, sulphur springs, and rich and varied deposits of minerals.

No doubt such rich, infernal soil has its effect on the vines as well. I have noticed after a bottle or two of wine from this ground, volcanic, sparkly mineral, and geyser-like feelings myself.

In the hills around the valley are ferns as big as ponies jumping up from springs that feed all the way from the Sierras. Redwoods and oaks, big madrones, and Douglas firs above, and all sorts of brush, including bay laurel and a pretty, deep red one called manzanita that looks like old Chinese jade carvings below, hold deer and game and very very rarely, but wonderfully, the odd mountain lion.

A beautiful place where people aren't serious is attractive. When word got out in the fifties they were giving free samples at the wineries, it became irresistible.

"Have you tried the Folle Blanche?" asks the man at the winery respectfully. *This can't be free, what's the catch?* thinks the suspicious motorist. The winery man pours out a nice dollop and smiles brightly. The motorist knocks it back and looks at other motorists who stare at their glasses and the ceiling, appearing to be concentrating. *So that's it, look like you're concentrating,* thinks the motorist, his suspicion beginning to look more like concentration. *Yep, it does taste different from, what the hell was that weird name?* "Say, what was that first wine called again?"

"Gewürztraminer. Would you like to try that again?"

"Yeah, it's different, sort of."

"More nose, a flowerier wine."

Continued on page 38


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(Continued from page 34) "That's it. God damn, now that is flowerier, all right—Margaret, taste how flowery this here Gewürztraminer is compared to that Folle Blanche you're drinking."

"Mmm, why yes, Marvin, I believe you're right. I never knowed you was a wine expert."

In this fashion, new customers for wine were seduced by the thousands. The knowledge there was a pretty place you could drive where they gave out free wine was almost too good to be true. The big rock candy mountain sung about by hobos in the Depression turned out to actually exist as a magically pretty valley during a time when there seemed to be little more money for everybody every year.

We were all astonished to hear Ivan Schoch had gotten a million dollars for his vineyard. A million dollars! The most famous amount of money in America had gone to somebody we knew for a damn old vineyard.

Prune and walnut orchards began to disappear like flat-top haircuts and Day-Glow socks and a new kind of resident began to appear among us. The women of this new breed went to the City (San Francisco) to have their hair done. The men looked more like the Kenyan coffee planters in Isak Dinesen books than regular old locals. Glamorous conveyances with the names of estates on the driver's door began to appear in the Safeway parking lot, outclassing the pickups and two-tone Oldsmobile Rocket 88s that had previously set the region's automotive standards. Even the names of formerly appalling, hillbilly regions like the Napa Valley's embarrassing white-trash brother, Pope Valley, suddenly looked rather glamorous painted in meticulous Bodoni on the door of a Mercedes station wagon.

Wine has always fueled romantics, and the new vintners look as if they may have tried to write a novel or do a little serious photography until, probably over a glass of great wine, they got the idea:

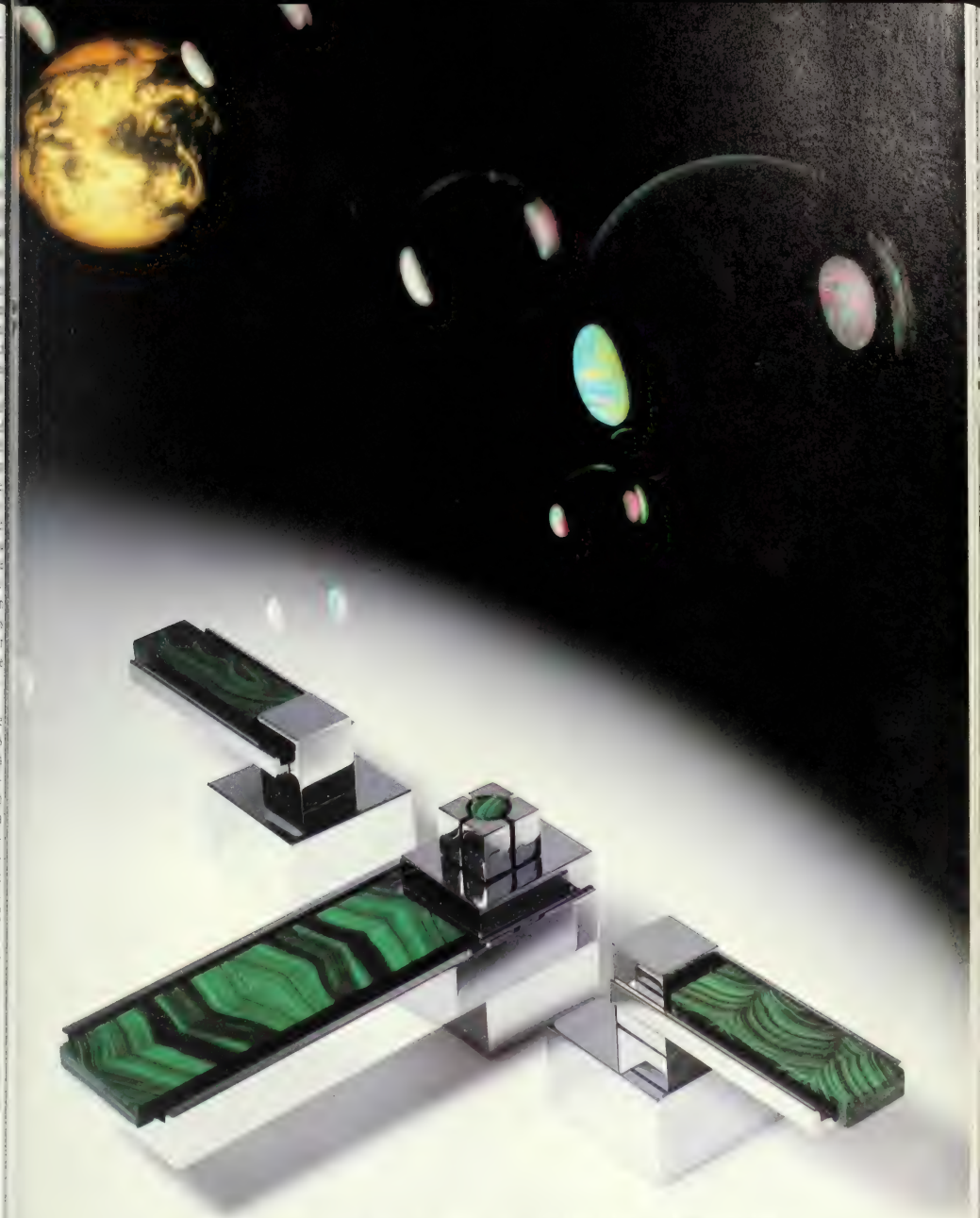
"Muffy, let's chuck it all and go buy a vineyard and do a winery in the Napa Valley."

"Oh Winston, what a great idea. I'll call the Salvation Army for your pinstriped suits. I love the idea of finally being able to really *use* my baskets."

The dreariest fry counter on Main Street in St. Helena, a joint so dismal my little sister once found spiders living in the soda straws, has been replaced by a French restaurant with deliberately few tables eagerly reserved for specified dinner seatings at something close to fifty dollars a head, not counting the wine. And this is only one of the sophisticated new dining rooms providing solids exquisite enough to be washed down with the hundreds of wines currently being produced by the wealthy romantics, hardworking agricultural daredevils, and old timers of Napa County. Restaurants called things like L'Auberge du Soleil (with the former chef of Le Plaisir of New York at the controls), La Belle Helene, Rose et Favour, Le Rhône, and Domaine Chandon have caused a run on the Petit Larousse in the St. Helena Public Library. Miramonte, the French Laundry, the Silverado Restaurant, the Calistoga Inn, the Mountain View Hotel, and more—and new ones on the way—have changed dining for the better dining in a region whose highest prior sophistication was the introduction of garlic salt in the fifties.

Now you see balloons looming in the valley sky, strange gorgeous things passing by slowly carrying people in a different element from earth. Sailplanes are up there, too. You have to reserve a month in advance to get a mud bath up in Calistoga, an experience that ranked well behind attending the quarter-mile dirt track roadster races in the same entertainment crazed metropolis, or bluegill fishing in Conn Lake back in the Paleolithic Culture that was dragging its knuckles over the valley floor during my youth.

Well, so what if the Napa Valley still surprises my mother with how beautiful it is? So what if these slickers are coming in and finding out all sorts of new things to do with her? It's something like finding that the old painting in your room you always thought was pretty is a famous lost masterpiece. It's fun, a little unnerving, but sort of complimentary all in all. To find the place you set out from to see the beauties of the world was more beautiful all along is just the kind of thing Miss Ivy Loeber was always trying to drill into us at Sunday school back when prunes were almost as important as grapes in the valley under the Lady Lying Down. □



"Give me a lever long enough and I will lift the earth."—Archimedes.

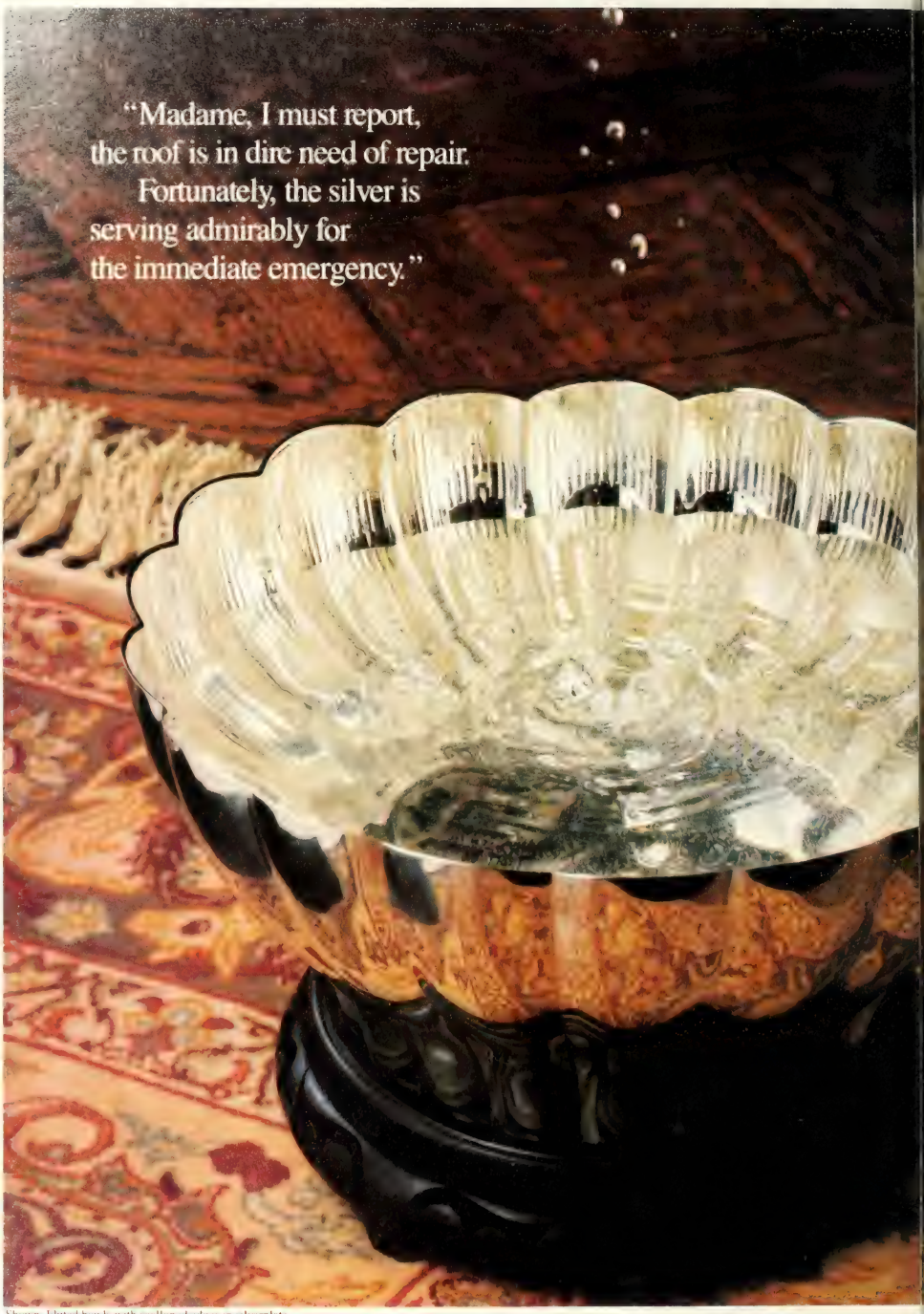
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THE FIRST WITH THE FINEST

Didier Aaron and his sons have been consistently ahead in their confident choices and glamorous presentations

By Nancy Richardson



Above: Hervé Aaron in his family's New York gallery.
Opposite: A "Turkish Corner" from Aaron's nineteenth-century exhibition.

The Aaron family have been antiques dealers for four generations, thereby falling into that class of human beings in whom the love of objects is bred the same way that little noses or high arches are bred into others. In the nineteenth century the family lived in Holland and dealt in old-master paintings. They eventually moved to Paris. Didier Aaron's mother was a private dealer in eighteenth-century French furniture and the Oriental objects—mainly Chinese—that went so well with it. After World War II her son began to make his name when a well-known Portuguese collector consigned to him a famous collection of silver. Since then Didier Aaron and, more recently, his sons, Hervé and Olivier, have been known for a strong selection of eighteenth-century furniture both in Paris, and since 1977, in New York. But the story is more than that. Recently Aaron has become not only a source for museums and big collectors, as he always was, but also a kind of bellwether. Having accustomed himself long ago to what it cost to deal in the most unusual objects of the eighteenth century, Didier Aaron is able to do his buying based not just on the safe conventionality of provenance or rarity but on the spirit of the piece. Would it sing out to visitors as they entered the room? In spite of the fact that the eighteenth century was so influenced by fashions set by queens and royal mistresses, the Aarons have continually presented the century from a different point of view, rarely offering the sometimes over-refined taste of the court after 1770. They tend to offer the most comfortable of the chairs made for Louis XIV, the most masculine furniture made during the rococo, and the things with the strongest Neoclassical influence made during the reign of Louis XVI. Theirs is eighteenth-century court taste but with little reference to Mme. de Pompadour or Marie Antoinette. As a result almost any important desk, center table, or pair of chairs bought at Aaron has sufficient presence as both a piece of sculpture and an element of decoration to anchor a clean, contemporary space. As a result of years of vetting eighteenth-century furniture in this way, Didier Aaron had filled his gallery in Paris at 32 Avenue Raymond Poincaré with things that look well with eighteenth-century furniture as well as furniture that grew out of the eighteenth-century spirit. Like his mother, Aaron deals in Chinese objects but adds to them the exaggerations and variations of Japanese, Korean, and Indian decorations. He and Hervé and Olivier love the unusual combinations found in Oriental furniture made for the European market. A peculiar clone of an eighteenth-century commode shape made in Indonesia of exotic dark woods inlaid with mother-of-pearl is for them the most charming of jokes. The bottom floor is filled with these eccentric things; the second has important eighteenth-century furniture and paintings. Then comes a floor of Empire, Regency, and Charles X furniture and another floor of old-master paintings—Olivier Aaron's specialty.

Years ago clients began to ask Didier Aaron to arrange their houses. To accommodate them Aaron began a separate decorating business. Since the sixties Alain Demachy has had his name on the door of the gallery in Paris, and later Jacques Grange's was added. Demachy and Grange, as well as François Catroux, are associated with Aaron in New York.

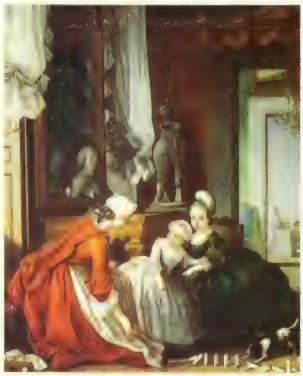
In the seven- (*Continued on page 44*)



"The Aarons love big-scale eighteenth-century furniture. One large piece has the presence to anchor a contemporary space"

(Continued from page 42) ties, in a business climate that had led English dealers like Mallett and Partridge to establish a foothold in New York, Didier Aaron encouraged his son Hervé to open a New York gallery for the family. To a double-sized town house at 32 East 67th Street, Hervé Aaron brought a quality of French eighteenth-century furniture not often seen in quantity in America. Today collectors can find a world-class commode by Joseph and a riveting drop-front desk made by Roentgen for Catherine the Great. There are also a variety of eighteenth-century chairs, tables, and desks for $10,000–$50,000 at the level just below that of Roentgen working for the Russian court. Recently a large part of the New York gallery has been given over to an exhibition of eighteenth-century paintings, which have been sold both to collectors and museums. In a collection of 29 canvases hangs an irreverent L.-L. Boilly of a girl holding a bedpan for her little brother, a Hubert Robert of a romantic ruin, and a sumptuous J.-F. de Troy of a domestic scene. Since the Aarons deal in both furniture and paintings, one is always pleasantly aware that the paintings have been visualized hanging in a library, sitting room, or bedroom. It is not that the colors of the pictures will match the walls, but that the mood of the picture is suitable for certain rooms or furniture. In the recent exhibition a Desportes still life was hung over a sideboard in an upstairs gallery just as it might be hung in a dining room.

In 1974, before he left Paris, Hervé Aaron had mounted an exhibition of forty quilts at the gallery on the Avenue Raymond Poincaré. Only one sold. The French at that point were not ready to buy quilts, but what they began to say was that young Hervé had an eye. And once Hervé had established his family's reputation in New York,





Above: *Les Petite Princesses*, J.-F. de Troy. *Below:* Victorian sofa by Meeks, with suite of mahogany-framed architectural drawings by Maurice Gras.

his eye began to wander from the high craftsmanship and tone of the eighteenth century to the inventions of the nineteenth. As French Empire, Charles X, and Regency furniture were no longer inexpensive, even at auction, Hervé left what eighteenth-century enthusiasts acknowledge to be the "good taste" part of the nineteenth century and launched wholeheartedly into the flamboyant eclecticism of the American Victorian period. He worked with Judith Hollander, an expert in nineteenth-century furniture, who with decorator Jed Johnson had given Yves Saint Laurent's apartment in New York a look of James Fenimore Cooper crossed with Napoleon III. Hervé explained to Judith Hollander that he strongly preferred the work of furniture makers like Herter and Meeks to that of John Henry Belter and his followers. With her advice he assembled a collection of outsized American Victorian furniture that he presented in an exhibition a year ago. That exhibition marked the first time a major dealer in America had presented a well-edited and high-quality collection of late-nineteenth-century furniture for sale.

Knowing that most people could not even look at Victorian furniture for imagining all the other things that went with Victorian-period decoration they didn't like, Hervé Aaron and designer Robert Currie took a great deal of care to present the furniture in roomlike settings that were not completely period. Instead of using William Morris materials he covered big Herter armchairs in white cotton so the eye went straight to the carving of the chair and not to the pattern of the material. On the walls was a series of giant watercolors of plans for a nineteenth-century palace that never got built. Their simple big mahogany frames looked just right with the dark wood of the chairs.

In another room large neo-Gothic furniture sat against walls papered with late-nineteenth-century decorative paintings of women in white, artists' studios, fantastical great halls furnished with giant palms spreading forth from porcelain jars of elephantine proportions. The Aarons have always loved *(Continued on page 48)*


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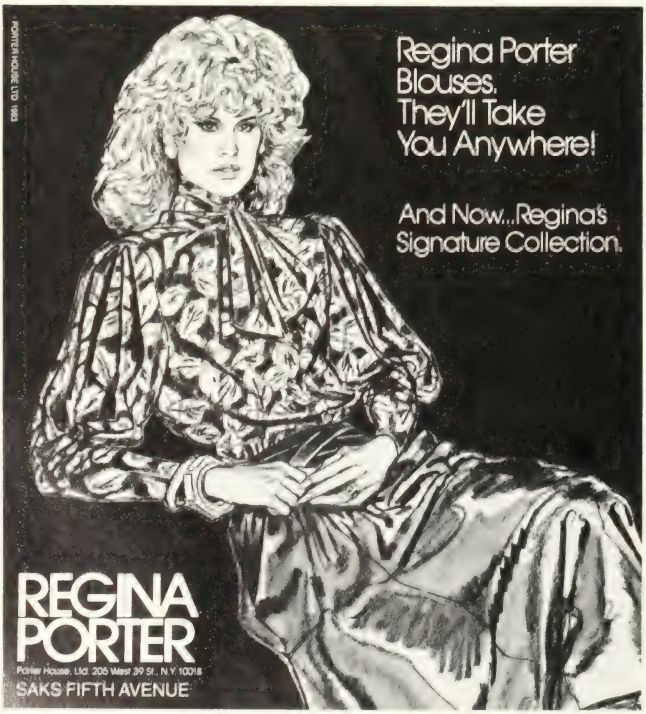
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Henredon





French faux bamboo dressing table in the window of Didier Aaron, Inc.

(Continued from page 44) lacquer screens and Chinese paintings on glass, and to these things Hervé added shawls and carpet-covered cushions to make a Turkish corner that winked at onlookers in a twentieth-century way. Next month Hervé will put on a small exhibition of the sort of watercolors that nineteenth-century decorators did for their clients to enable them to visualize what a proposed rug or ceiling would look like.

Today Didier Aaron, New York, is a gallery that offers a sophisticated assortment of eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and even twentieth-century furniture, objects, and paintings. The five big-league American collectors of eighteenth-century furniture buy there, a younger crowd comes in for eighteenth-century furniture and nineteenth-century avant-garde pieces. West Coast entertainment figures find Art Deco pieces by Ruhlmann, Printz, and Dunand that express a richness of craftsmanship that justifies prices that have begun to approach those of eighteenth-century furniture.

At a Sotheby's French-furniture sale recently Didier Aaron was sitting in the front row along with the other Paris dealers in eighteenth-century furniture, Hervé with them. At a certain moment, Hervé got up, went to the back of the room, and bid, unnoticed by his fraternity, on an early-nineteenth-century dressing table and returned, deadpan, to his seat. Which is to say that once the love of the object is in the blood no one period can confine it. □



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FORM FOLLOWS FORM, BUT DOES IT FUNCTION?

The modern fascination with beautifully designed objects has often obscured the important question of how well they work

By Rosemarie Haag Bletter

DESIGN: DIETER RAMS
François Burkhardt and Inez Franksen, editors. Gerhardt Verlag, West Berlin
30 DM, 230 pp.

BY DESIGN
By Ralph Caplan
St. Martin's Press
$16.95, 208 pp.



Four products by Braun, *clockwise from top left:* electric shaver, wall clock, pocket calculator, and travel alarm clock.

If you were to find your coffee grinder, your toaster, or your hair dryer inside an art museum, you might suppose that you were dreaming. But if you were to visit The Museum of Modern Art in New York, you might encounter just such objects. Industrial design has come a long way. Two recent books deal with this subject in almost opposite ways. *Design: Dieter Rams* is about the influential design director of Braun AG, the German appliance manufacturing firm, and it approaches the subject of industrial design in a conventional sense: as product design. The second book, Ralph Caplan's *By Design,* uses the subject as a springboard to discuss everything from software, fast food, interiors, and taste, to the design of social conditions.

The Museum of Modern Art has over thirty of the sleek, beautiful appliances by Dieter Rams and his team at Braun. Rams joined Braun in the mid-fifties at a time when the firm had begun to work closely with the postwar reincarnation of the Bauhaus, the *Hochschule für Gestaltung* (College of Design) at Ulm, West Germany. The severely simple and elegant Braun products have become modern classics, and they may remind many of the "functionalism" of Bauhaus designs of the twenties. But therein lies a problem. The book on Dieter Rams is an appreciation of his work by friends and colleagues. Few questions about other possible design solutions are raised. Only one of the contributors mentions that his own Braun designs did not always work properly. Yet he believes that there must be "a visible connection between form and function." More revealingly, he continues that if the design *looks* good, most of us are led to believe that the performance must also *be* good. Consequently "design turns into an advertising trick if it is implemented to conceal deficient technology." This crucial insight is brushed aside with an apology for the designer: "I have to force myself not to be unjust to the designer when cursing the engineer."

Dieter Rams seems to prefer order to confusion. Typically, he likes to pick up trash he finds on his walks through the woods. Yet one of his colleagues insists that Rams would be disturbed by "a sterile kitchen that permanently admonishes the housewife to pull herself together and be perfect." *By Design* is in the end more informative than *Design: Dieter Rams* because Caplan avoids such rote assumptions. If a kitchen design makes demands on its users, why is it only the housewife who is affected? What about her husband? Moreover, Caplan is critical of product designers who often assume that the consumer is a woman. He recalls with disapproval the words by a well-known ad man: "The consumer is not a moron. She is your wife."

Design that is meant to provide status and class is another of Caplan's incisive topics. He points to the 1930s in America as the catalytic period in industrial design. During the Great Depression, designers were employed to create desirable images for products that otherwise might not sell well. The ultimate artifact in this symbiotic relationship between status and advertising is the product with a company logo or designer monogram. While our cars and refrigera- *(Continued on page 56)*

It's More you.

It's beige.
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(Continued from page 52) tors for a long time have been emblazoned with the insignia of their manufacturers, we might feel odd if the same were done with our furniture.

But the more recent acceptance of designer names and initials on handbags, luggage, dresses, or even fur coats may signal an eventual acceptance of status advertising on all our manufactured goods. In a society in which everything is marketable, the designer label and its attendant status



Two striking but impractical Bauhaus objects. *Top:* Bronze-and-silver teapot, Marianne Brandt, 1923–24. *Above:* Painted wood cradle, Peter Keler, 1922.

can also be instantly bastardized. The run-of-the-mill $5 T-shirt with the words "Calvin Klein" (sold on a street corner and probably manufactured illegally) no longer looks like a design by Calvin Klein. Such a T-shirt is sold because the name "Calvin Klein" has achieved a commercial life of its own. It is not a design *by* Calvin Klein but *about* Calvin Klein.

The notion of taste obviously plays a

arge role in the way we judge design. Caplan deflates many cherished beliefs on this topic. He regards "good" design as a red herring because it "is no different from good sex or good food. No one wants bad *anything*." Avoiding possible pomposity, Caplan assures us that the designer is not really a tastemaker. If it seems that the designer is always a step ahead of public taste, this does not mean that the designer is more enlightened than the public. Rather, the industrial designer must constantly come up with "saleable concepts for the future," designs that are slightly different without being shockingly strange.

Caplan believes that the public does not resist the superior but it does reject the thoroughly unfamiliar. He cites a particularly amusing episode in the history of would-be tastemaking: the creation of the American Institute of Approval, formed in the sixties by a group of society matrons. For a daily rate of $1,500, they could be hired by manufacturers to inform them whether or not their products were tasteful. The group seems to have gone out of business. "I can always tell when someone's taste is improving: it moves closer to my own" is Caplan's final *coup de grâce* to all prospective arbiters of taste.

The author of *By Design* credits the Bauhaus, the German school of design founded in 1919, with giving the comparatively new field of industrial design a theoretical focus comparable to Freud's role in psychiatry. While designers and museums are still influenced by the pioneering efforts of the Bauhaus, Caplan complains that it set too dogmatic an example. Here he puts more trust than is warranted in Tom Wolfe's witty but freely invented *From Bauhaus to Our House*. Contrary to current myth, the dictum "form follows function" was never a battle cry of Bauhaus teachers, nor did it play a large part in the design workshops. In fact, early Bauhaus crafts were decidedly Expressionist and more folkloric than functionalist.

During the mid-twenties, the period for which the Bauhaus is today best known, machinelike objects of great elegance that do indeed look functional were created. Looks, of course, can be deceiving. For example, a Bauhaus cradle done in *(Continued on page 60)*

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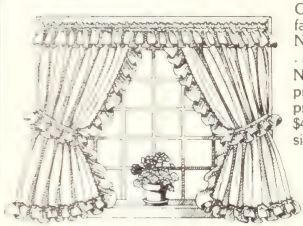
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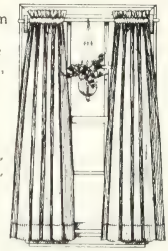
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L. and J.G. Stickley, Mission Style easy chair, oak and leather, c. 1900–15

(Continued from page 57) simple geometric forms, with a prism-shaped bed and circular rockers, hardly recommends itself for use. Not only would the unfortunate owner have to find a prism-shaped mattress, but the round rockers are not equipped with any stops: an active baby would have to be strapped in. Another strikingly designed Bauhaus object, a bronze-and-silver teapot reduced to hemispherical, circular, and semi-circular forms, has a solid ebony handle. With a full pot of hot liquid, it would be virtually impossible to get a good grip. These designs from the middle years of the Bauhaus were more about functional image than actual function. Only in its late phase, under the directorship of Hannes Meyer, did the school turn to a practical sort of functionalism together with a concern for economical production. Sleekness was no longer important. But these truly functional designs are rarely illustrated today because they look much too ordinary.

A separation between form and function is not characteristic of Bauhaus products alone. As Caplan makes clear in his disarmingly straightforward way, many of our classic modern designs are not fully adapted to human use either. Even Frank Lloyd Wright preferred an old-fashioned, overstuffed Morris chair to his own straitlaced, highbacked wooden designs. Many chairs do not conform to the human body: many are not comfortable for sitting, and many are difficult to get out of. Chairs are based on average human size, but most of us are either smaller or larger than the "ideal" proportions they are geared to. Buying chairs is like buying shoes: they may

eel comfortable in the store when we ry them on, but because we do not test hem for one or two hours, the real try- ut occurs at home when it is too late to eturn them. For this reason it is pri- narily the look that sells a chair, and omfort in many cases is treated as an fterthought. *By Design* cites Randall arrell's teasing phrase that some peo- le "will sit on a porcupine if you first xhibit it at The Museum of Modern rt."

But Caplan does not stop with a dis- ussion of comfort. Function to him lso includes our social behavior round chairs. Do we pull them into a ircle for easy conversation or do we sit acing the television set? How do we sit n chairs? What does our body lan- uage express when we lounge or sit at he edge of a chair?

In contrast to *Design: Dieter Rams,* with its admiring and solemn tone, *By Design* displays a wry sense of humor. High seriousness is mocked as we are eminded of our own frequent run-ins with industrial design. Ralph Caplan's ook is thought-provoking for the de- igner and is at the same time readily ccessible to the layman. The merit of *By Design* is that it is not only about roducts. It is also about the design of ossibilities, about problem-solving, nd, most important, about human ncounters that are forever affected by lesign.



Frank Lloyd Wright, side chair for the Imperial Hotel, Tokyo, oak, c. 1920.

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THE DESTINATION IS THE MEAL

Off the beaten track in France and Italy, at least half the fun is eating there

By Jason Epstein



A window of the Norman cathedral in Altamura

A few years ago, my friend V. and I lost our way in Gascony, or perhaps we had crossed the border and were actually in Les Landes, to the west. In any case, we were lost. Dinnertime was approaching. We had left it to chance where to dine and spend the night and there was rain in the sky. Through the car window, streaked with the first raindrops, I could see our egg-shaped driver in his blue suit, gravely pacing the side of the road, map in hand, baffled. Beside me, V. was thumbing through his worn red Michelin. "What do you think?" he asked, pointing to a page. "We have been heading more or less west. If we continue west we'll get to the coast in an hour. On the coast road from Bordeaux to Biarritz in a village called Magescq are two stars," he said. As he talked I read in the Michelin that in Magescq not only did M. Cousseau own a two-star restaurant, but he had rooms for the night, too.

By the time the sun had set V. and I were seated at one of M. Cousseau's tables large enough for six, its cloth stiff and white, the candles glowing beside a bowl of violets. The dining room was nearly empty, for the season had not yet begun. Across the room our driver was halfway through his solitary beefsteak. A man and woman at another table silently ate from one of those four-legged servers that elevate one's oysters to the level of one's chin. On a table beside the dining-room door a silver tray, propped against the wall, held an array of woodcocks in their brown-and-gray feathers, their beaks crossed like lances. On another platter were some ortolans resting on a bed of ferns, and beside them a ring of thrushes. At the center of this display was a platter of asparagus. According to the teenage waiter, his face scrubbed, a faded gold braid an inch or so above each cuff of his white jacket, the asparagus was grown by Mme. Cousseau herself.

As for M. Cousseau, he was soon standing beside our table with yet another of his silver trays cradled in his arms, and on the tray was a salmon, its eyes so bright that they seemed to be returning V.'s curious stare. We had begun our dinner with duck livers nearly the size of tennis balls, braised in a brown sauce and served with a few raisins. Next came the salmon, grilled with a bearnaise; for this was before *la nouvelle cuisine* displaced the classic sauces in favor of the more astringent beurre blanc and Kiwi slices. After the salmon came the ortolans, which we ate head and all, and perhaps because there was no one else on hand to eat them, M. Cousseau sent us each a woodcock with his compliments, accompanied by a dish of asparagus served at a little more than room temperature with a mild and slightly warm vinaigrette. By the time we left the following morning, having had our toasted *pain de mie* and blood-orange juice as thick as syrup, Magescq was fixed to our memories like an early love affair.

For V. and me, Magescq remains a mature and settled affection to which we return from time to time with predictable gratification and by which we judge, whether consciously or not, subsequent enthusiasms. By this measure our visit last spring to the Ristorante del Corso in the old city of Altamura near Bari in the region of Apulia was a considerable event, though we came upon it not magically as we had found Magescq, but with avid forethought. Forethought at least on V.'s part, for he had several times made the three-hour journey from his place near Amalfi to Signor Lorusso Antonio's restaurant in Altamura and had seized upon my visit to Italy as an *(Continued on page 64)*

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(Continued from page 62) occasion to go again.

So one fine Sunday morning V. and I found ourselves heading across the Italian boot along the Apulian plain through groves of olives and almonds in their new spring leaves. Ahead of us on the Adriatic lay what Horace, according to the guidebook I held in my lap, had called "fish-famous Barium," as he and Virgil made their way along the Via Appia from Rome to Brindisium with their patron Maecenas. From time to time we could see in the distance Castel del Monte, the eight-sided citadel that Frederick II completed in 1240 and which dominates the surrounding plain with its olive groves, its vineyards, and its fields of durum wheat, which is said to make the best pasta in Italy.

Shortly after noon we had reached Altamura, its buildings of fresh cement stained and crumbling in the sun as new cement waited beside battered mixers to be poured the next day. Along the streets shutters were drawn and in the square men in black suits and hats chatted in flocks. The women of Altamura were nowhere in sight. Eventually, V. and I, having driven up one narrow street and down another, found the high wall from which Altamura takes its name and that encloses the medieval city at whose center in a cobbled piazza sits a Norman church of the twelfth century. Signor Anonio's restaurant is diagonally opposite with nothing to mark its presence but a faded sign over the door and a few Mercedeses basking in the piazza.

The floor is tiled. The white plaster walls are hung in red velvet. The rooms are well lit by skylights along the ceiling and there are sconces on the walls. Immediately V., our driver Nicola, and I are taken to the back room, which is already filled with Italian families at long tables arranged against the walls; aunts, uncles, cousins, grave-faced babies sampling the pasta that will forever determine their culinary inclinations, adolescents in flower, their ceremonial Rolexes heavy on their wrists, ancients in black dresses, the faces Saracen, Byzantine, or Greek or North African by way of Sicily, with occasionally a redhead to recall the Norman hegemony nearly a thousand years ago or perhaps some later invasion. "Italy is a time machine," V. remarks. "We live here amidst our ancestors." Nicola, eavesdropping, tells us that at the table next to ours the family has come from Potenza, the capital of Basilicata 75 kilometers away, and is in the wine business. Now and then someone interrupts the babble at one or another table, rises, and makes a little speech. Otherwise everyone talks at once but under the high ceiling the room isn't noisy. Though we don't mean to eavesdrop, V. and I are attentive. The room is a theater. There is no avoiding the drama.

On our table, upon a white cloth, sits a basket of Altamura bread, famous as far away as Amalfi, for Nicola had told us about it as we drove past the fields of wheat that alternate with the olive groves. (Later, at Elio's in New York, I was to hear about this same bread from the chef, a man from Bari.) The bread is yellowish, the color of wheat, and is pungent like wheat. There is no menu. The waiter, who comes from Matera a few kilometers away and who calls himself Franco of Matera, brings a plate of proscuitto from San Daniele in Friuli, north of Venice, and another ham that he calls "speck" and which he tells us comes from Hungary. Later he brings some ham from Modena in the North. He also brings some small black-and-white clams called *tartuffi,* or truffles, and some brownish razor clams called *datteri,* or dates, *(Continued on page 66)*

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Yet we didn't feel, as one often does after a three-star meal in France, ready to die, for only the risotto and the pasta came with sauces and these were light

(Continued from page 64) which taste like the sea. Another waiter brings a bottle of white Corvo and a vintage Chianti Classico on whose label the Duke of Antinori has printed his name in small letters. "When the proprietor is a duke and his name on the label is small," V. explains, "you can assume the wine is good. When the duke's name is big, something is being covered up."

Franco soon brings us three small octopuses. According to the guidebook I had been reading, the fishermen of Bari throw them against rocks to make them tender. They have been browned in oil, braised in wine with a little garlic, and are a wonder. The culinary style here is ancient and as clear in its intentions as a Greek temple. If not Aeneas himself, then surely Virgil and his friend Horace must have eaten octopus much like this, which is not to say that Signor Antonio's place is antiquarian by design. Its connection with the past is continuous, unselfconscious.

So is its connection with the wordly present, for no sooner had we disposed of the octopus than Franco brought us each a risotto with smoked salmon and a bit of cream. There is nothing provincial about Apulia, with its Greek colonizers, its Norman aristocracy, its Hohenstaufen emperors, its hams from Friuli and the Danube, and, for all we knew, its smoked salmon from Petrossian in Paris.

Before we were done three hours had passed. After the risotto Franco brought us three pastas in succession—*fusilli,* spiraled like the inside of a rifle barrel, with red and green peppers and tomato; *orechette,* or little ears, with the mushrooms known as *porcini;* and startlingly a thin pasta with slices of bitter orange and prosciutto in cream. By the time Franco brought our grilled lobsters, caught the night before on the far side of the Adriatic, we were nearly replete. If not for the local mushrooms called *cordoncelli,* each four inches across and grilled with a little oil and garlic, we would have called it a day. Yet we didn't feel, as one often does after a three-star meal in France, ready to die, for only the risotto and pasta came with sauces, and these were light and the portions small.

With the dessert came Signor Antonio himself, a Saracen with a rope of gold around his wrist that must have weighed half a pound. "Nothing special here," he explained. "I started with a bar in '63, then a pizzeria. Just the local cooking. Nothing special. Do you know my niece? She works on 52nd Street. For CBS. Do you know the place?"

Later Franco brought us the bill along with some chocolate truffles, each with a different filling. "It went well?" he asked. "Very well," V. replied and turned to me saying, "If ever I defect you will know that I have gone to the Soviet Union, because it is the last place where you can find a good servant," implying that Franco was something more, unattainable.

At last we tottered into the afternoon sun of the piazza. Nicola threw himself into the car and fell asleep while V. and I climbed the steps to the church. "We will ask them to open the crypt for us," V. said. "Isabella, the third wife of Frederick II, is buried inside. She was the daughter of King John and the sister of Henry III. If things had taken a different turn she would have been the English queen. Anyway, she's worth meeting."

From behind the altar there emerged one of those damaged young men who in New York are left to wander the streets but in Italy are given brooms and assigned instead to sweep the churches. "We are visitors from England," V. improvised, "and we would like to see your queen who might have been *our* queen." The young man seemed puzzled and explained that there was no queen here. "In the crypt, in the crypt," V. explained. "We want to see her bones." Alarmed, the young man disappeared behind the altar and returned a moment later with a bent old woman of enormous age, toothless but with an alert eye and gracious smile. "No, no Signor. I have been coming to this church every day for eighty years. There is no queen buried here."

V. explained to me that it was Sunday. It was late. The old woman probably wanted to go home. "They are like this in the South." He handed her a thousand lira and kissed her on the forehead. She took the lira, acknowledged the kiss, but continued to insist that there was no queen buried here. She would, however, go for the woman in charge of cleaning the church. She would know what to do.

"Ah yes," the woman in charge explained when she arrived and caught V.'s determined look. "You are right. The queen is here, but we are not strong enough to open the crypt." She pointed convincingly to her two assistants. "Maybe you'll come back another time." The old woman nodded her agreement. The young man grinned and seemed to roll his eyes.

Vindicated, V. and I left the church and got into the car behind Nicola, who had now awakened. "I knew all along that Isabella was in the crypt," V. said to me. "Too bad they couldn't be bothered to open it up. They had no trouble the last time I was here." As we drove through the twilight past the darkening olive groves I managed to read in the guidebook that Isabella's bones were at rest not in Altamura at all but in Andria, 55 kilometers away. "Look," I said to V., showing him the book. "Isabella's somewhere else. The people in the church were right. The last woman was trying to humor us. She must have thought we were mad." But V. was staring through the window at Frederick's octagonal castle and didn't answer. Before it became too dark in the car to read further I managed also to discover that when Henry sent his beautiful sister to marry Frederick in such splendor as to dazzle Europe, she carried among her treasures a set of silver cooking pots, a lovely way, it seemed to me, to start out in Apulia. □

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FUN WITH THE FORBIDDEN

Once anathema to Modernists, the nineteenth century is catnip to young antiques dealers and some very established decorators

By Nancy Richardson

The avant-garde in decoration, like its Post Modernist counterpart in architecture, is looking back for "new" ways to arrange furniture as well as "new" shapes, patterns, and colors. What the eye fixes on has been long ignored and until recently firmly out of fashion. It is the very period that the Modernist theory set out to repudiate in the first place. That the nineteenth century looks so fresh is only a measure of how totally it has been eclipsed since the thirties. Surprisingly, then, we find that the nineteenth century, like the twentieth, was full of both straight lines and curves, starkness and a congenial jumble. In fact, because of their variety, nineteenth-century interiors have something to offer a range of twentieth-century tastes.

Decoration in the first half of the century tended to be spare, architectural, masculine, and strongly Neoclassical. Today's Modernists find a kindred mood both in the severe Classicism of the rooms that suited Napoleon's personality and in Biedermeier furniture fashioned to look like little buildings. The pleasant Neoclassical domesticity of town houses in the American Federal style as well as much Greek Revival architecture represent other moments a Modernist could identify with. Even the somehow cozy austerity of artists' studios and writers' rooms recorded by early-nineteenth-century painters parallels the Modernist fascination with lofts and studios used as living quarters.





Top: Black and blond "Etruscan" room in the palace at Potsdam, 1840 watercolor, F.W. Klose. *Above:* Robert Denning uses faux pine outlined in black to imitate the *bois clair* furniture popular in the 1840s. Here, in a New York library.

The period from 1850 on was voluptuous, eclectic, personal, and cluttered. It is remembered for a fanciful release into plump upholstery and an abundance of patterns and textures on walls and floors—a consciously created atmosphere of timelessness and security designed to counteract, at least at home, the effects of industrialism and political instability. The established route for fashionable ideas was from the middle classes up to what was left of the court and its way of life. In a period of thirty years, practically every episode in the history of architecture from the Gothic to Louis XVI was wheeled before the public like successive stage sets. A taste for these rich, almost theatrical effects of the second half of the nineteenth century was popular with the Empress Eugénie and her circle as well as with the French and English Rothschilds. Twentieth-century Rothschilds have continued in a nineteenth-century mood. Whole-room fantasies by Lorenzo Mongiardino and the inspired recreation of Ferrieres in Second Empire high-style by Henri Samuel have provided an unbroken continuity with the time when the Rothschilds were to the nineteenth century what the Bourbons had been to the eighteenth.

Designers like Mongiardino, Henri *(Continued on page 70)*

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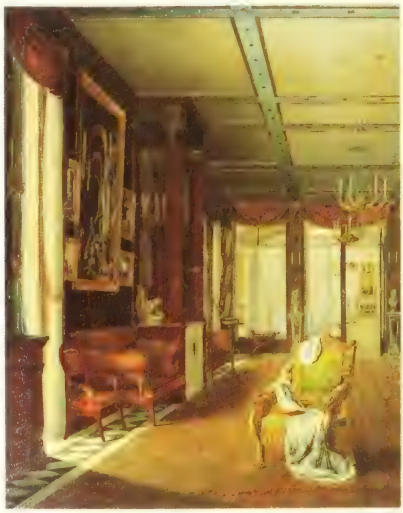
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(Continued from page 68) Samuel, Geoffrey Bennison, Vincent Fourcade and Robert Denning, and film directors Lucino Visconti and Franco Zeffirelli (in their film sets) have reveled in the romantic excesses of the late nineteenth century for at least twenty years. Independently minded and well-established antiques dealers like Jacques Kugel and Didier Aaron in Paris have always sought out high-quality, early-nineteenth-century furniture. But instead of being in opposition to the prevailing taste, as they were in the fifties, sixties, and seventies, today they represent the rich if not the experimental end of the avant-garde. A group of young antiques dealers, auctioneers, and decorators are working out charming but more everyday interpretations of nineteenth-century rooms. They, like the first group, look to Mario Praz for inspiration. Praz's *An Illustrated History of Interior Decoration* (first published in 1964 by Thames and Hudson, recently reprinted) has become source book and inventory guide for decorators seeking novel ways to treat curtains and young dealers wanting to know what to buy at auction, where nineteenth-century furniture, especially the late upholstered pieces, is plentiful and quite inexpensive. In another book, *Neoclassicism* (Northwestern University Press, 1969), Praz reveals his own preference within the nineteenth century: "The Empire Style, my favorite style, is—I cannot deny it—a style which offers easy game to caricature. It is a common criticism that it is cold, stiff, that there is something funereally monotonous in its eternal sphinxes, its swans, its goats, and lions' feet. If one counts the wild animals' feet on the pieces of furniture in my home, one reaches the noble number of seventy; and if to the sphinxes, the lions, the eagles, and the monopodial swans are then added the eight tortoises supporting the cheval-glass and the bookcase, there is quite a little zoological garden."





Top: New York antiques dealer Jean-Paul Beaujard mixes important Empire chairs with other large-scale nineteenth-century decorations in imitation of the mood of Napoleon's music room at Malmaison, in a famous watercolor by A. Garneray, *below.*

But Praz had a twentieth-century mind; it is his view of the nineteenth century rather than the century itself that we gravitate to. If designers describe a room as "very Mario Praz," Praz himself described the nineteenth century as "very Keats." Praz loved the nineteenth century because it was in the past and therefore nostalgic and, as some people think, a little sad. He loved the mood of that century as only someone can who has lived through the upheavals of the twentieth century, which in its contrast, emphasized his impression of the prior century's sweetness, sober gaiety, and tranquility. Praz's nineteenth century was actually a moment in his own imagination (as in ours), a place appealingly cut off from the present, a place many people would now like to have waiting when they come home at night. That we see nineteenth-century interiors in Praz's history of decoration through watercolors and paintings of interiors is in itself appealing. These minor works of art present a room in a very different way than a photograph would, offering the psychology of a room and not just its decoration. The fact that most of these watercolors imply that dogs, children, and servants have just left the room and may reemerge in a rush from the bottom of the garden is exactly what makes them such a convincing source to raid for ideas. From Praz's history of decoration, nineteenth-century house museums, and galleries of nineteenth- *(Continued on page 72)*

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(Continued from page 70) century pictures in England, Europe, and America, we find a variety of nineteenth-century ideas to adapt for today.

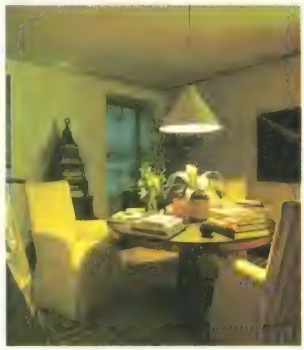
The most familiar and commonly practiced interpretations are based on rooms done for Napoleon. Both his tented council chamber and library at Malmaison were widely copied then and still are. As a result, the use of striped linen or mattress ticking to cover walls and chairs as well as to tent ceilings has become a well-respected device for doing up a man's room. The arrangement of mahogany bookcases intersected by perpendicularly placed columned cabinets in the Malmaison library is another sophisticated convention. A well-known Rothschild male of our generation prizes a "suite"—bed, desk, and chest of drawers—of Empire furniture in his dressing room. Vincent Fourcade chose this sort of furniture for his own dressing room, which is really a place to watch television or videotapes on a big screen that descends from the ceiling.

Napoleon's stepdaughter, Hortense Beauharnais, was one of the first people on the Continent to rethink the placement of furniture in a drawing room. Instead of grouping chairs and long seats around the fire, she set up a table in the center of the room around which people could stand or sit and talk, do needlework or paint. Today these round tables appear in sitting rooms as a substitute for the twentieth century's favorite arrangement—a long sofa flanked by two upholstered armchairs. Recently Albert Hadley put a round Biedermeier table in the center of his sitting room and surrounded it with high-backed chairs upholstered in striped linen—instead of the conventional sofa and chairs, which he took out.

There were wonderful ways of faking architectural details in the nineteenth century. Borders used three deep and scenic wallpapers that looked like enormous paintings gave rooms the illusion of depth or of a window looking out onto a world. The Biedermeier period in particular suits our current taste for layers of curtains—ornamental ones in an important material that frame a window from the inside; a gauzy, often transparent embroidered cotton panel that shields the window from a passerby's view; and finally, heavy paneled shutters that close the "eyes" of the house at night.



ROB REBSEN



EDGAR DE EVIA



COURTESY MUSÉE DES ARTS DÉCORATIFS

Top: Gothic hall chair, Musée des Arts Decoratifs. *Middle:* Albert Hadley's sitting room; a round table substitutes for a sofa. *Above:* Wallpaper panel.

The nineteenth-century use of color seems pure peacockery in contrast to the twentieth-century love of white, yet is was also a time when white was used in a very romantic way. Praz, who loved the vivid, sober, and distinguished yellows, deep reds, royal blues, and emerald greens of Empire silks and damasks, has nothing but praise for the Neoclassical use of white and gold found in early-nineteenth-century Russia. He tells us of white marble columns on Neoclassical buildings in Saint Petersburg, officers' white uniforms, and white shoulders on girls in white dresses covered up ever so slightly by voluminous paisley shawls (the very shawls that the Victorian era, as well as our own, has cut up to cover cushions). Praz's own library in Rome, soon to open as a museum, is an example of this sort of white and gold.

The Etruscan combination of black and blond was also very popular in the nineteenth century—sometimes executed as whole room reproductions of Pompeian vase designs, often occurring in fruitwood furniture that had been inlaid with a design in ebony or just in black paint. Robert Denning employed the scheme recently in a black and blond library. Madeleine Castaing, a Parisian decorator and antiques dealer now in her eighties, who has never been interested in anything *but* the nineteenth century, loves to use pale blue with black trim on walls and furniture. With it she uses black English Regency furniture and light floors. This use of black furniture instead of white or "wood"-colored furniture is part of the stylishness of the Prince Regent's private apartments at the Brighton Pavilion. Black Regency or Victorian japanned furniture is showing up everywhere now as our eyes search for dark furniture instead of light. As important to Mme. Castaing as black furniture is "Russian" wicker furniture still with its original stain or dark green *(Continued on page 75)*

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ANTIQUES

(Continued from page 72) paint. Among nineteenth-century aficionados anything "Russian" or anything once part of a winter garden—even late-nineteenth-century American wrought-iron benches—has special appeal beyond color, shape, or provenance.

As the nineteenth century went on, the refined Robert Adam–inspired Classicism in English furniture design and the gentle Neoclassicism of the Louis XVI style in France, with its straight legs and genteel proportions, gave way to a sometimes monstrous but often eccentric and charming new proportion and curviness. Big chairs became huge and small chairs grew idiosyncratic and proliferated. The charm of many a recently done sitting room stems from these eccentrically sized and shaped chairs. In fact, they have almost become the symbol of the nineteenth century. Harder to get used to are the giant mahogany breakfronts and pier tables made from the 1850s on. Used successfully they give a room a paneled look. Late Victorian sideboards and cupboards became an excuse for exuberant carving that looks like rococo boiserie with a sense of humor. An equally exaggerated look came over eighteenth-century porcelain about midway into the nineteenth century.

The taste for Victorian furniture in this country has been developed most significantly by Sotheby's Victorian International sales, which have gone on for the last four years. The most elaborate furniture—exposition pieces designed especially for the world's fairs that conditioned world taste so extensively in the latter part of the nineteenth century—has found a home with rock stars and others who have an extravagant taste and can afford the hefty prices. Still inexpensive and full of charm is the more ordinary furniture available in most auction rooms.

Recently a group of new young dealers in New York have offered a sophisticated and finely tuned selection of nineteenth-century furniture. Jean-Paul Beaujard is the Frenchman who introduced many of the major New York decorators to nineteenth-century furniture. From time to time he assembles exhibitions of sofas, chairs, desks, sewing boxes, and footstools, pieces often illustrated by nineteenth-century watercolors of rooms that hang above them. Other New York dealers, Juan Portela and his partner Christian Herbaut, had a shop in Paris until last year. They offer a remarkable range of neo-Gothic furniture and clocks as well as little-seen, early-nineteenth-century furniture.

Mario Praz collected the work of minor artists and thereby made a point about the kind of pictures that look at home on neo-nineteenth-century walls. This sort of art includes portraits of people and rooms, landscapes as well as almost postcard-like scenes. Most popular are the paintings of animals. Wheelock Whitney is the American who assembled the exhibition of watercolors of interiors for London dealers Hazlitt Gooden & Fox two years ago. Recently he has opened a gallery in New York of nineteenth-century American and European paintings that, in addition to being of good quality, offer themselves as appealing decoration.

Undoubtedly the nineteenth century is in the air. Confirmation of its fashionability came recently: Mrs. Charles Wrightsman, the premiere American collector of French eighteenth-century furniture and objects, has also begun to collect nineteenth-century furniture.

DRAWING A BLANK

Downtown's new face tells us cities are dangerous, passersby are undesirables

By William H. Whyte

Big blank walls are fast becoming the most visible feature of our downtowns. There are still many buildings with windows and doors in them: walk-in banks, restaurants, stores, signs, and such. But these are legacies of the past. More and more, the new complexes going up turn a blank wall of concrete to the street. Convention centers, downtown shopping malls, garages, institutions of one kind or another: they are remarkably alike in their vast expanses of blankness. And not by inadvertence. These walls were meant to be blank and they have a message. They are a declaration of distrust of the city and its streets and the undesirables who may be on them.

A primary model is the suburban shopping mall. In its habitat blank walls are functional. They provide more merchandising space inside and the absence of display windows is no problem. People have already made the decision to enter the store when they drove their cars there. There is no need to beckon passersby. There are no passersby.

Now the form is being transplanted from the shopping mall to downtown, where there are passersby and streets and other buildings. Here the form is little changed; about the only adaptation is in the parking. Out of necessity, instead of being spread over acres of asphalt, it is concentrated in multilevel structures. And these add yet more blank wall, albeit with diagonal and horizontal slashes that make them better to look at than the complexes they serve.

Small- and medium-sized cities are especially susceptible to such projects. They have been the most hurt by the regional malls and the most prone to throw in the towel and copy them downtown. The civic leadership, furthermore, is likely to be almost wholly suburban. A whole generation of leaders—and designers and planners—is coming along for whom the nearest thing to an urban center they have experienced is the atrium of a suburban shopping mall.









From top: The Raleigh Telephone Building, Raleigh, North Carolina; the Washington, D.C., Convention Center; Convention Wing, Seattle Sheraton; 1 Union Square, Seattle.

Convention centers are especially noticeable. They are big in big cities; they are big in smaller cities—great massive hulks of concrete, stretching two or three blocks, and with nary a window in them. Convention experts say this is the way they have to be. There would be "leakage" otherwise. They would like to see a tight seal against the outside. They don't want people looking in, and they don't want the people inside looking out, either; indeed, if some experts had their way they'd lock up the conventioneers for the duration.

The separation works. I've charted pedestrian activity on civic spaces adjoining some of these centers and found surprisingly little relationship to what's going on inside and what isn't going on outside. Within, there might be four thousand ophthalmologists, but on the sidewalk and benches of the adjoining spaces only a handful of people.

In some places the separation is so pronounced there are two cities: regular city and convention city. In the latter, the conventioneers follow an almost closed circuit, by shuttle bus from the convention hotels to the center and back. Spouses do get to shop, but they're also segregated, and on the whole there is little intermingling between the conventioneers and the natives. At night the separation is complete. The streets are deserted. Most restaurants have closed. The office force has gone home. The only life is in the atria of the hotels, conventioneers with other conventioneers.

Institutions like blank walls. Almost always there is *(Continued on page 80)*



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From Syrie Maugham's white-white rooms to grey flannel walls and other one-color concepts.

It's not only the so-called major arts that reflect the tone and tenor of their times. When Syrie Maugham's white-white rooms appeared in the twenties—their "pickled white" furniture placed against spare white walls, the settings spotted with white feathers, white seashells, and white everything, as well as with chrome and mirrors—they were as much a statement of the soul of their era as were cubism and atonal music. The now-famous postwar mood seemed to embrace all manner of things from shingled hair to *le jazz hot*. The times they had a-changed indeed. And a 'new decor' held sway. Again.



Mrs. Maugham probably didn't think of herself as either a revolutionary or a social reporter. Her sensibilities (like those of any good designer-decorator in any era) were clearly attuned to the past (and what was wrong with it) as well as to the exciting present (and how best to live in it).

Her spare, uncluttered rooms with their spare and uncluttered use of color were partly a turning away from the formality and heaviness of the preceding Edwardian and Victorian years. But they were, even more, a looking forward to the simpler, easier, and lighter standards that suddenly, it seemed, had now emerged in every aspect of life and held sway internationally. (An intriguing footnote to Mrs. Maugham's celebrity as a designer is the persistent reappearance of the literary connection in the decorating arena. Before she made her mark as a decorator, Mrs. Maugham was very much a member of the international literary community via her extravagantly successful writing husband. Through the years, literary lionessess—Mrs. Trollope, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Edith Wharton—often employed their insights to affect the look of real houses and rooms as well as to comment on what went on in fictional houses and rooms.)

Designers seem to have a tradition for periodically cleaning things up, throwing out the past and bringing in the present. Minimalism follows modernism. High-tech follows Bauhaus. "Take everything out!" is a recurring designer's battle cry. Yet, people being people (and designers being people, too), "Put things back in!" is another battle cry—of which the much-vaunted Post-Modernism of today is a lively example.

And even though a room completely swathed in grey flannel may well be as oppressively self-conscious as one thoroughly bedecked in flowering chintzes, the idea of a carefully controlled color palette appears to be one whose strength prevails in all sorts of eras and for all sorts of decorating styles.

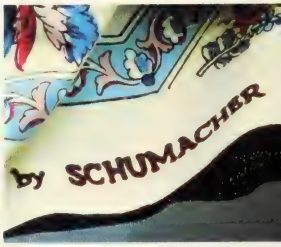


The very 1980's townhouse sitting-room shown here, designed by John Robert Moore, is a contemporary example. Although the room is as monochromatic as any period Maugham, there's an easy up-to-the-minute vivacity about it. This result is achieved by the subtle play of texture against texture, as well as tone against tone. The imported cut-velvet covering the couch and the tussah silk with random-dyed-warp on the ottoman (fabrics shown, above) are examples of this latter-day ease and compatibility.

Returning for a moment to Syrie Maugham, the tufted armless easy chair, (shown at top, right) was designed by Mrs. Maugham, and is another of her prescient decorating ideas. The chair, from a private collection, is here upholstered in a slubbed 100% DuPont Dacron® polyester that no doubt would have appealed to Mrs. Maugham for its good looks. Its equally great practicality is a decidedly more modern yet equally appealing attribute.



From the 1890's on, F. Schumacher has been a key participant in the decorator/designer process. As the world's foremost supplier of every conceivable type of fabric—many woven in Schumacher's own mills—F. Schumach continuously offered "the trade" a u fabric library. The newest ideas from a the world; an encyclopedic inventory past; an exhaustive color palette; a s print or weave to carry out some s project or idea; they are all here. through the years, the name Schumach selvage, wall-covering, or rug, has cont to provide an authoritative assurance. V may be why, generation after generatio signers continue to exclaim, insist, orde think, "Surely, Schumacher."



Schumacher's Illustrated Notes on 20th Century Taste. One of a se





From left: J.C. Penney, Quaker Bridge Mall, New Jersey; Convention Center, Dallas; James River Plaza, Richmond, Virginia; FBI Building, Washington, D.C.; Convention Center, Kansas City, Missouri.

(Continued from page 76) a technical explanation: the wall space is needed for the stacks, for climate control for the computers, for lighting unvaried by natural light. But these are not the real reasons. Blank walls are an end in themselves; they proclaim the power of the institution, the inconsequence of the individual, whom they are clearly meant to put down, if not intimidate. Stand by the new FBI headquarters in Washington: you feel guilty just looking at it. It is a truly menacing presence, yet, ironically, is itself vulnerable, full of the kind of lurking spaces and dead ends and niches the wise person avoids.

Power and fear are conjoined. To judge by their design, one would gather that the institutions feel themselves under seige. TV-surveillance cameras are everywhere. Signs abound telling you, redundantly, not to do this or do that. (My favorite is at the base of the Long Lines Building of New York Telephone. The expanse is breathtaking—forty-plus stories of solid brick, probably the biggest blank wall in all the world. There is one small sign: "No Ball or Frisbee Playing," it says.)

A word about surfaces is in order. There is quite a variety. So far I have catalogued over sixty different ones: plain concrete, concrete striated horizontally, concrete striated vertically, powdered granite, brick, High Tech metal, mirror glass, dark glass, every kind of glass except the kind you can see through. From a distance, to be sure, these surfaces do tend to look remarkably similar, reading to the eye as a dirty gray as often as not. The walls are so dull almost anything else looks better in juxtaposition. They cry for graffiti, a touch of the vulgar. They would also seem a good blank canvas for the trompe d'oeil murals. I have not come across any. Murals are too fanciful, too contrary to the spirit of the walls.

The ultimate expression of the blank wall is the megastructure. These fortress-type buildings enclose a mixture of uses—offices, hotels, stores—and they enclose them so hermetically that there is little contact with the city around them, which was what was intended. Proponents say they are just being hard-headed. Like it or not, they say, the only way to get the middle class to use the city is to offer security from the city.

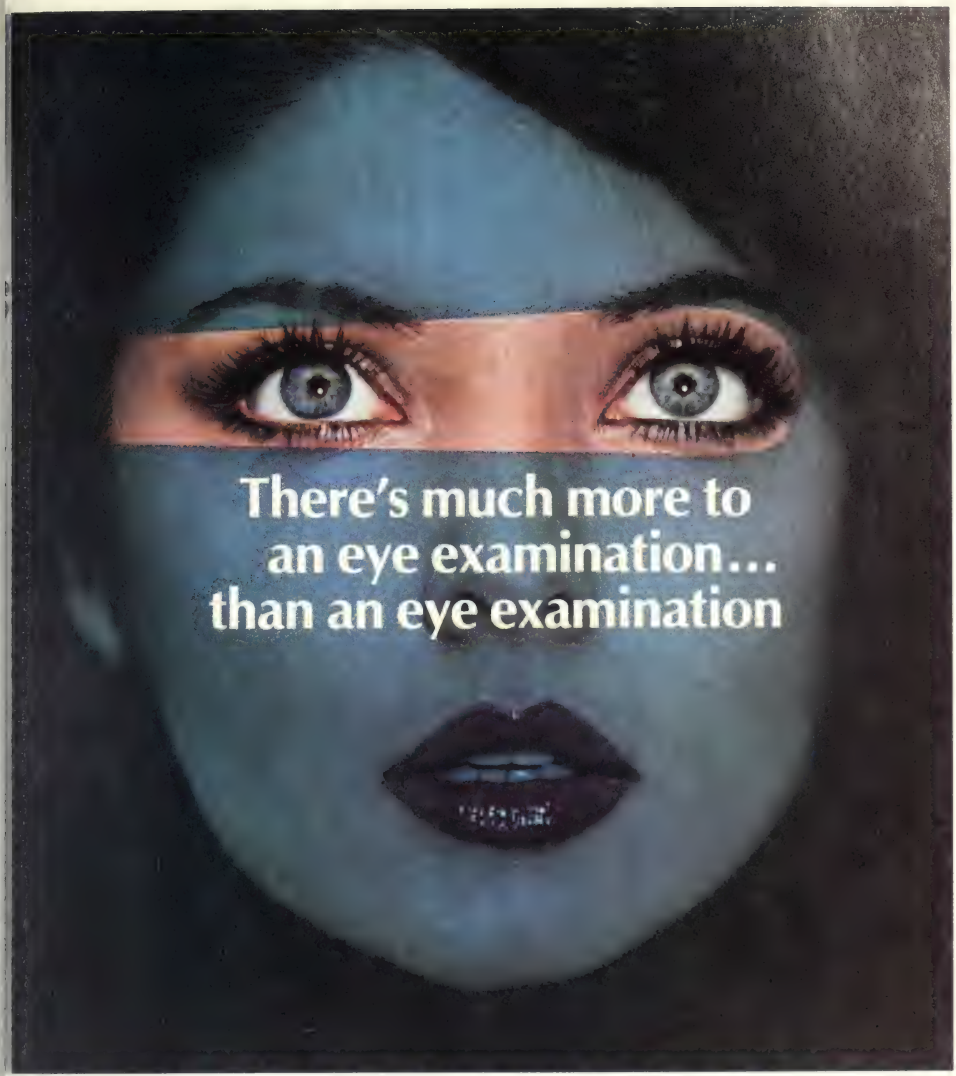
So they do. At Houston Center, for example, one can drive in from suburbia directly to the center's garage, thence by elevated walkway to the office; and at dusk back again, without once having to set foot in Houston at all. And why should one? Save for vehicular portals, the street façade below is solid black wall. The only activity is a drive-in bank. At Detroit's Renaissance Center a huge concrete berm sits across the entrance, promising safety from the Detroit without. Megastructures in other cities make similar gestures. To save the city, they repudiate it.

They also deaden it. Walk alongside one of these hulks and note the number of people on the sidewalks. There will be few. There will be few also on the blocks beyond. Blank-wall buildings not only kill off the life of the streets immediately adjacent, they break the retail continuity that is so vital to downtown.

And they don't work very well on their own terms. Most of the fortresses are not doing well financially, and one, Renaissance Center, has been near bankruptcy. Cities for people who don't like cities, it turns out, is not so hard-headed a concept after all. People much prefer the real thing and the proof is in the marketplace. The two most successful new downtown projects are Faneuil Hall in Boston and Harborplace in Baltimore. No blank walls here, they are open to the city; indeed the streets virtually run through them. They are crowded, busy, and noisy. They are *city* places.

We have not seen the end of blank-wall projects; a number are under construction or on the drawing boards. But there are countertrends. New York recently moved to outlaw blank walls, in effect, by requiring that new buildings in commercial areas line the street level with shops and restaurants. San Francisco has similar legislation. In Toronto there was a civic uproar when plans for a new convention center were unveiled. Too much blank wall. It was redesigned to provide retailing at ground level and glassed terraces and cafés above.

Let us hope the countertrend gives people who love cities cities they can love.



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HOUSE & GARDEN, SEPTEMBER 1983

1777 AND NEW AGAIN

BY ALBERT T. GAMON
PHOTOGRAPHS BY OBERTO GILI

Mention the eighteenth century to the average American and he immediately forms a vision of powdered wigs, daring décolletage, and soft, muted colors. While the first two images might have some validity, the third is a distorted reflex, conditioned by the restoration philosophy of Williamsburg and other longstanding and famous historic shrines. In the 1930s, '40s and '50s, when an historic building was being researched for restoration, it was considered perfectly proper to determine the color of paint to be used by removing all the layers of old paint down to the first one, and blending new paint to match the color thus found. This resulted in restorations being painted in a way that, instead of reflecting the original colors as applied, duplicated those same colors muddied by many years of dirt and grime, bleached by the sun's ultraviolet rays, and finally darkened by the solvent integral to the next coat of paint. In short, the vibrant, vivid colors that our eighteenth-century ancestors saw were replaced by the muted (and marketable) colors seen two hundred years later by the mid-twentieth-century restorationist. Recent improvements in analytic instruments and techniques have changed all of this. It is now possible for the paint analyst, having found the earliest layer (or any subsequent one), to determine what the paint looked like

Opposite: When visitors first see the interior of the house, the sponge-decorated wall of the winter kitchen often produces an audible gasp. *Overleaf left:* Wavy eighteenth-century glass in this second-floor back-hall window distorts the view of the gable end of the barn. *Overleaf right:* The side window of Washington's room looks out on two chestnut trees and the kitchen garden.









Almost a family shrine, the room said to have been Washington's was used so seldom that it was repainted only once in 185 years. All architectural details are original, and the dado decoration was repainted over the original. The day bed is from Chester County, Pennsylvania, and the country armchair has a local provenance. A pewter beaker holds a small bouquet of mock orange flowers.







Opposite: Looking into the living room from the hall. The tea table is set with Oriental export porcelain. The arm and side chairs are both from Philadelphia. *Above:* A reticulated Dutch delft bowl holds fresh apples, while a Pennsylvania pewter plate presents wafers to go with the port wine. *Overleaf:* Red sandstone and rough paling contrast with the Georgian symmetry of the structure, as the rustic bean poles contrast with the geometric order of the sunken garden paths.

when applied. This has led to a rapidly changing philosophy at those restorations frozen to a particular moment in history. Many are now showing the paint colors and decorations *as they were*, not as twentieth-century conditioned taste says they should have been.

The Peter Wentz Farmstead was purchased in 1969 by the Commissioners of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. Restoration was begun in 1971 under the overall supervision of the county's Historical Advisory Board. The mandate from the Commissioners was to recreate a glimpse of eighteenth-century county life by restoring the farmstead to the way that it was when Washington was headquartered there during the Pennsylvania Campaign of the fall of 1777. Historic Architect for the project was John Milner Associates (then National Heritage Corporation); Frank S. Welsh, Historic Paint Consultant, was responsible for the paint and decoration analysis and subsequent restoration.

It was not too difficult, in the early seventies, to accept Frank's findings of bright, vibrant, eighteenth-century colors, particularly since there was still an area on the interior of a corner *(Text continued on page 192)*







Opposite: Pillows were piled high in the eighteenth century because of the notion that good health was achieved by sleeping in a semi-sitting position. The season of the year is evident by the lack of hangings on the bedstead.
Above: Exposed, beaded beams and local furniture suggest the domestic station of the rooms in the rear half of the house. Pennsylvania redware covers the mantelpiece and a rye straw bee skep (beehive) rests on a Dutch cupboard from Bucks County. The ladderback armchair is typical of eastern Pennsylvania, while the fan-back Windsor was probably made in New England. Built-in wall cupboards, such as the one shown, are not uncommon in Pennsylvania stone farmhouses.





This page: View down the hall and through the open back door. Summer beam and pilasters are in the foreground; decorated dados flank the back door. *Opposite*: A series of doorframes draws attention from the freshly baked bread in the summer kitchen across the breezeway, through the winter kitchen and into the dining room.





This page: A trompe-l'oeil Irish-stitch daybed pad counterpoints a raised panel fireplace wall in the Washington room. *Opposite:* A bed of Egyptian onions and the garden fence lead the eye to the stark black and white window trim. This combination of expensive paints in the eighteenth century announced that a wealthy man dwelt within.



A VIVID HOUSE FOR A LIVELY COLLECTOR

Mrs. Randolph Williams of Parish-Hadley decorates a Southwestern house

PHOTOGRAPHS BY FELICIANO



Good ceramic pieces and lots of them: these are the jewels of Laurie O'Connell's rooms. Here, in the informal sitting room, majolica lends the force of its form, color, texture, and glaze. An Irish woolen rug from Stark brings freshness and clarity to the room and organizes its strong colors.





Opposite and *above:* The more formal of the two sitting rooms. Laurie O'Connell explains that unlike people who aim for one consistent flow of color and mood, she prefers each room to have its own look. "Then if I get bored, I can move to another atmosphere." English red-lacquer secretaire is a favorite piece.

About a decade ago Laurie O'Connell, who shares this Southwestern house with her eight-year-old son, was a bride in New York in need of professional decorating help. Or so her mother thought, pointing her daughter toward Parish-Hadley. "Who are they?" Laurie O'Connell said at the time. She's come a long way since, and not only geographically.

Mrs. Parish assigned the new client to Bunny Williams, and when the two young women met, each was delighted to rediscover an old friend from teen days, lost track of in the years between. They are not likely to lose track of one another again. Mrs. O'Connell's sentiments about working with Mrs. Williams: "It is a wonderful continuing learning experience. Bunny has taught me a lot about my own taste." Mrs. Williams's thoughts: "A client like Laurie is what makes decorating such a joy. She listens and learns and then really goes with it."

The collaboration that began in New York continued in the Southwest. The Georgian-style structure was almost completed when the women entered the picture, and they made one architectural change, substituting fine hardwood parquet for more ordinary floors. Their major effort lay in the decorating, which built upon Laurie





Opposite: Part of the Imari collection adorns the library, but it is called into service for dinner parties. Laurie O'Connell often chooses representational fabric patterns. Throws from Mabel's. *Above* and *below:* A full-dress dinner with majolica plates, elephant centerpiece. Mrs. O'Connell also likes informal buffets and barbecues and plans surprises such as ponies for the children or fortunetellers for the adults. "There is no icebreaker like a wizard."





Opposite: The table beside the bed is described by Bunny Williams as a "What-is-it?"— one of a pair that she and her client loved on sight and had painstakingly restored. Linens by Frette. *Above:* The appeal of majolica is demonstrated by the richness and variety of a momentary still life (it often changes) on a low sitting-room table.

O'Connell's color and style preferences, on her collections of majolica and Imari, and on the way she lives.

Mrs. O'Connell is an enthusiast: when she began collecting ceramics, initially at Mrs. Williams's suggestion, the quantity and quality of her rapid acquisitions amazed her decorator, as did an equally rapid acquisition of expertise. The collecting continues and new fields have begun to pique Mrs. O'Connell's interest: ceramic portraiture, rugs, chandeliers.

Laurie O'Connell's fondness for English antiques is evident in her rooms, as is her penchant for vivid color. Her personality is vivid, too, and she is an avid party-giver, often in conjunction with her work as a volunteer fund-raiser for charities and the ballet.

"I like the hospitality in this part of the country," Mrs. O'Connell says. "The door is open, you can put your feet up, and the dog can come in, too. If something gets dirty, I can clean it." The prized china is not coddled either, brought to the table for meals, grabbed for ashtrays—part of a house that is thoroughly lived in. □ *By Elaine Greene. Produced by Lynn Morgan*



NOT BUILT IN A DAY

Piero Pinto transforms a castle near Rome for fashion designer Laura Biagiotti

BY ISA VERCELLONI
TRANSLATED BY ELAINE GREENE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY CARLA DE BENEDETTI



Marco Simone castle, whose substructure contains columns and inscriptions of Imperial Rome. The tower is fourteenth century, the wings fifteenth, the corner fortifications sixteenth. The Baroque portal leads from the main courtyard into an internal one. Behind arched windows: a reopened loggia.





Presiding over the second-floor drawing room, once divided into three parts and now restored to its original proportions, an eighteenth-century marble statue in the Roman style represents Summer. In the 1500s Federico Cesi I did an enormous remodeling here and had his name inscribed on numerous door lintels. Pinto regrouped them all in this room.





Two protagonists: the first austere, patrician, marked by age and hardened by vicissitudes, and charming in the melancholy way of one who has seen better days. The other, a woman of talent and success, strong and at the same time gentle, creative, and imaginative, a person with determination and a capacity to follow through, and a seeker of a solid, lasting foundation for living and working.

Given these premises, there could have been nothing between the castle of Marco Simone and fashion designer Laura Biagiotti but a beautiful romance. At their first encounter, in 1977, "a kind of madness seized me and I tenderly pursued it," Laura says today. She hesitated briefly but knew at the bottom of her heart that theirs was to be a common destiny. Then, the great decision having been made, came the "betrothal," which lasted four years, a reasonable period of preparation for a life together: four years filled with hard work and the joy of antici-

Above: Laura Biagiotti, whose castle is being hailed as the finest restoration of a historic site in the Agro Romano (Roman countryside). *Right:* Piero Pinto designed the drawing-room floor in three zones, marked by borders of travertine around areas of terra cotta. Fifteenth-century frescoes dominate the room. Large cupboards from the former sacristy now store books.





New white tiles of various shapes create a rug-patterned floor for the white drawing room on the lower level. The contemporary furnishings display the spirit of superimposition that marks the castle's long history. Beyond the American primitive bird is one of the saintly frescoes found in the former chapel.







Opposite: Looking down from the tower over rooftops of recycled tiles. The taller of the two complete outbuildings seen is the former chapel; the first floor is now used for staff meals, the second for Laura Biagiotti's studio. Barn behind contains offices and showroom. *This page:* One of the frescoed rooms. Pinto varied the travertine pattern in the floors: three variations are seen here.



patating for herself and her family and her entire business staff an extraordinary establishment that she would have saved from ruin and restored to life. And just like a lover in a real story, the castle of Marco Simone (named for a fifteenth-century owner) is young and vital again.

The restoration is the patient, loving achievement of an expert and sensitive architect/interior designer, Piero Pinto, a man who is utterly intolerant of artistic deceit. Like any worthwhile betrothal, this one, which Pinto superintended, was a happy adventure, luckily free of trauma, but rich in turning points and dramatic events. When one scrapes away the superficial skin to lay bare a deep truth, surprises of all kinds emerge. In this history the surprises were pleasant ones, often confirming that the right direction had been chosen.

"At the beginning," says Piero Pinto, "we found ourselves in front of a big ruin—fascinating, but still a ruin. The first job, itself very demanding, was to know where to start, which things to value, which to sacrifice." Apart from the difficulty of unraveling the tangled superimpositions of various periods, there were early problems involving traffic. Between the ground floor and the one above (the route to the tower), no indoor connection existed, only an outside stair. In a more advanced stage of work, Pinto came to understand, half by induction, half by intuition, that such a passage had to have existed and probably had been buried. "Without it the house would not have been fit to live in, in the past or now." He gave orders to excavate and his theory was confirmed. It was then that he knew he would achieve his aim of giving the severe old ruin the comforts of home—to domesticate it, in a word, while conserving its artistic and historic worth.

In one case of superimposition, fif-

Navy-blue and white tiles from Ceramica Musa cover the kitchen floor, walls, and counters; form borders; and outline preexisting niches. Upper walls and ceiling were restored and painted pure white, but the imposts of the arches retain their old color.



Opposite: In Laura Biagiotti's bedroom the large space and its stony surfaces had to be softened and made more welcoming. Piero Pinto veiled some of the walls, the windows, and the bed with white silk, actually a dress fabric. The bed, an 1830 Viennese piece, creates a room within the room. *Above:* The tower contains guest rooms such as one whose dressing area includes a Second Empire chest. Arched supports for the winding stair remain exposed, as do rustic irregularities of walls and vaults.

teenth-century frescoes were covered by nineteenth-century neo-Gothic paintings. In certain places the upper coat was crumbling, and Laura herself, while scraping a small piece on a Sunday afternoon, discovered the first little painted column. In demolishing partitions of a later epoch, which subdivided the upper *salone* into three rooms, another painted column and part of a small, delicious landscape emerged. From these discoveries came the euphoric decision to scrape away all the neo-Gothic pictures, the banal and even the pleasant. Most of the painted rooms were decreed by Pinto to remain rigorously empty—rooms of passage inhabited only by the rediscovered frescoes and whoever stopped to admire them. In one room four feminine medallion portraits, including one of Cleopatra, probably date back to ancient Rome and might have been removed from some great villa of the region. Other frescoes from the fifteenth century reappeared when the loggia was reopened. These paintings depict the four cardinal virtues and four divinities, in addition to naturalistic motifs, and reveal the most felicitous hand. Frescoes on sacred subjects were found in the former chapel and moved to the huge white drawing room: Saint Rocco and Saint Antonio Abate, both much invoked in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as protectors against the plague.

In the course of the long and adventurous effort, Pinto's work was much facilitated by *(Continued on page 202)*







SET FOR LIVING

Diva's art director, Hilton McConnico, today's American in Paris

BY PETER CHANDLER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY FRANÇOIS HALARD



Preceding pages: In the living room, Napoleon III chairs in a leopard print and a 1930s Sèvres lamp sit beneath Hilton McConnico's painting of one of his cats. The couches are covered in a pale gray French cotton, and a grès du Morvan turquoise-and-burgundy vase is on the coffee table. *Above:* Hilton McConnico. *Right:* Two paper sculptures by McConnico hang above a white lacquer dresser with chrome knobs he designed in 1972. Perfume bottles from the 1920s are holding the tulips.

When Hilton McConnico was first asked to design the sets for *Diva,* he refused even to meet the film's director. This was not, he said, because he'd never heard of Jean-Jacques Beineix, who was making his directorial debut with *Diva,* since no one in the upper echelons of the French film industry had heard of Beineix. The reason, he explained, was simply that he had just accepted another film.

The next day, that film fell through. Minutes later, Beineix's intermediary called again. And this time, Hilton McConnico was willing to meet Jean-Jacques Beineix.

"I'd never seen a frame of his films," McConnico recalls, "but I liked his vitality and imagination, and I had a feeling the film could be more than the script."

As it turned out, the film was a great deal more. Thanks to Beineix's "New New Wave" approach to the filming of a modest thriller, *Diva* became the most talked-about foreign film of 1982—lambasted by opera buffs and meaning-conscious critics, heralded by those who saw it as the first popcorn movie for sophisticated audiences. As one critic wrote, "It demonstrates the depth of pleasure a shallow movie can provide." This pleasure, as those who have seen *Diva* well know, has nothing to do with the script—and everything to do with Beineix's studiously cool sensibility, Philippe Rousselot's restless camera, and Hilton McConnico's astonishing sets.

Beineix, Rousselot, and McConnico have now collaborated on a second film, *The Moon in the Gutter,* which opened in Europe this spring to very mixed reviews and which comes here this month. *Moon* stars Nastassia Kinski and Gérard Depardieu, but its real star is Hilton McConnico—of the $3.5 million budget, just under $1 million went to build the richly detailed seaport city that McConnico designed for Beineix in Rome's Cinecittà studios.

The sets McConnico has crafted for





In the living room, foreground, plexiglass and [illegible] sculptures designed by McConnico in Rome when he was working on *The Moon in the Gutter*. Two stands of white plexiglass and black wood were designed by McConnico for a film. The curtains are made out of French diaper fabric held back with silk tassels.





Beineix's perverse visions may be the first reason American audiences recognize his name, but they won't be the last—Hilton McConnico has been continent-hopping with a vengeance. The day he finished *The Moon in the Gutter,* he left Rome for the south of France to do the sets and costumes for François Truffaut's *Vivement Dimanche,* a comedy thriller that also opens this fall. And, next year, he hopes to make an all-but-inevitable progression and direct a film of his own in France.

Hilton McConnico is delighted that he is, at forty, suddenly being talked about as one of the foremost set designers in Europe. He is also slightly amused by all the fuss. For McConnico, who was born in Memphis, Tennessee, and spent half his life there, still speaks with a Southern accent. And, in the tradition of our greatest interior designers, he considers himself less of a Continental artiste than a native pragmatist.

"I try to do what's right for each film," he says. "There's only one idea that never changes for me: that although we don't remember everything we see, all of it registers on us."

McConnico's career abroad began when he was sixteen years old and studying fashion design in Paris. On his return to Memphis, he showed his sketches to the owner of an exclusive boutique—and accepted instantly when he was invited to be an in-house designer. "I adored Norell at that time," he says, "but from the beginning, what was important to me was designing for each individual woman."

At eighteen, he was the only student at Southwestern College with his own design studio and clients in seven states. But by twenty, he was frustrated: "I had no competition, so I didn't know if I was any good. I went to *Vogue* and saw Grace Mirabella and Nicky de Gunzburg. They suggested that I go to Paris for a year and study cutting. I did, but I only studied for three months before I dropped out."

In 1965, "dropping out" meant any number of things, none of them geared toward worldly success. For Hilton McConnico, it meant staying in Paris and taking his sketches to Ted Lapidus, who hired him to create a collec-



Opposite: Fifties chairs are in the room used as a library, guest, and dining room. The columns framing the bookcase came from one of McConnico's films
Above: White lacquer cabinet and paintings are by McConnico. The two signed pewter vases are from the early thirties.



Opposite: In the kitchen, a fifties office table; black bamboo chairs, circa 1900. The cat painting on the tiles, by McConnico, is reflected in a thirties dressing-room mirror.
Above: The turn-of-the-century guest bed covered in white piqué.

tion for women. "In the South," McConnico says, "I'd had a *lot* of experience doing wedding dresses and debutante gowns."

Two years later, he began to freelance. In short order, he had designed the first men's ready-to-wear collection for Saint Laurent and filled a studio with new paintings. And, slowly, the young man who spoke a very idiosyncratic French made his first connections in French theater and film.

It was here that McConnico's great personal style and love of outlandish costumes met its first resistance. "I wanted to do the sets and costumes for a short film that my friend Bob Swaim was making," he recalls. "It was a film about French peasants. I really had a hard time convincing him I wasn't going to put the people in elegant hats and fashionable clothes."

Once he proved he could do grit as well as gloss, the doors started opening for McConnico, and he was soon working with Robbe-Grillet and Claude Miller. Although the sets he did for them in the mid-1970s were seen only by the art-film audience in America, they made Hilton McConnico's reputation in Europe. As well they might—when McConnico ordered three thousand red apples from Italy for a Jean-Paul Belmondo film and the Italians delivered three thousand green apples, the set designer and his crew spent days hand-painting every green apple red.

One of the most distinguished French set decorators, Alexandre Trauner, once attacked *Diva* as a dangerous film, contending that it was composed of things that smell bad, but just before the audience notices how bad they smell, the camera turns to something glossy. Hilton McConnico, who was striving for just this "dirty but polished atmosphere," takes that slam as the most perceptive compliment he's received.

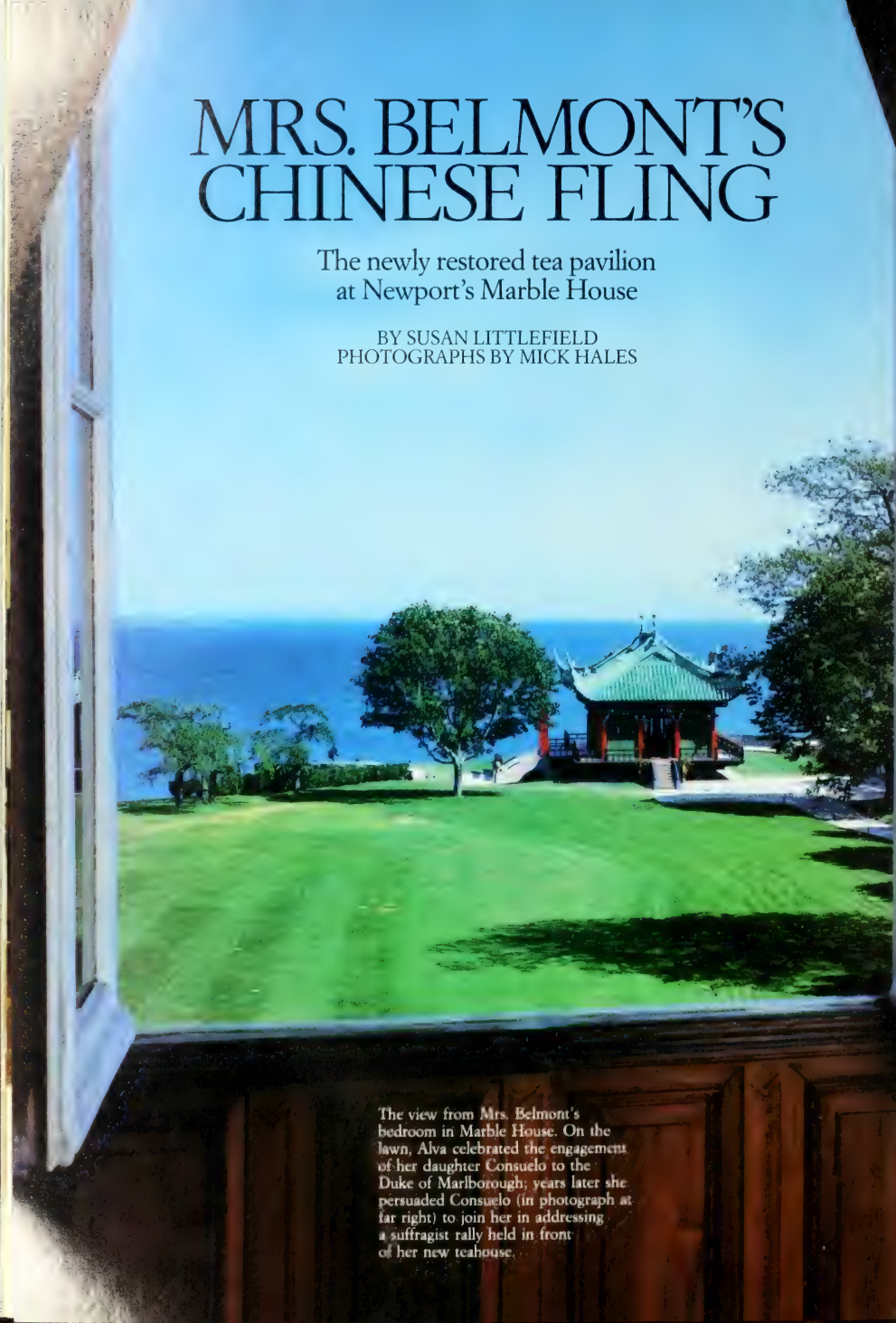
For *Diva,* ostensibly a romantic thriller about a Paris motorcycle messenger and an American opera singer, is, on the more immediate visual level, a giddy exploration of colorful surfaces. The messenger lives in a grubby parking garage—but the walls are covered with astonishing frescos that McConnico craftily *(Text continued on page 200)*



MRS. BELMONT'S CHINESE FLING

The newly restored tea pavilion at Newport's Marble House

BY SUSAN LITTLEFIELD
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICK HALES



The view from Mrs. Belmont's bedroom in Marble House. On the lawn, Alva celebrated the engagement of her daughter Consuelo to the Duke of Marlborough; years later she persuaded Consuelo (in photograph at far right) to join her in addressing a suffragist rally held in front of her new teahouse.







On a July evening in 1914, Newport's most recent architectural extravagance was aglow with the soft light of Chinese lanterns. The summer season was at its height, and Alva Belmont, a portly sixty-year-old widow, was celebrating with a Chinese costume party and dance. Wearing an antique robe embroidered with dragons and diamonds, she greeted her guests in the Great Hall of Marble House, then escorted them to a late supper on the lawn.

Barely visible from the supper tent and too small to be the scene of the party, Mrs. Belmont's new teahouse was the object of the evening's festivities. It perched on a bluff above the ocean, surrounded by a dense stand of pines. A stream ran nearby, arched by a Chinese bridge. Beyond the bridge and before the teahouse, a Victorian garden sparkled with geraniums in neat triangular beds, and two great flagpoles flaunted yellow banners. The garden reflected the formality of Marble House, but the pavilion itself was isolated, oriented to the cliffs and the sea. In one study, the architect, Richard Howland Hunt, even depicted the teahouse as a remote temple in a classic Chinese mountain landscape.

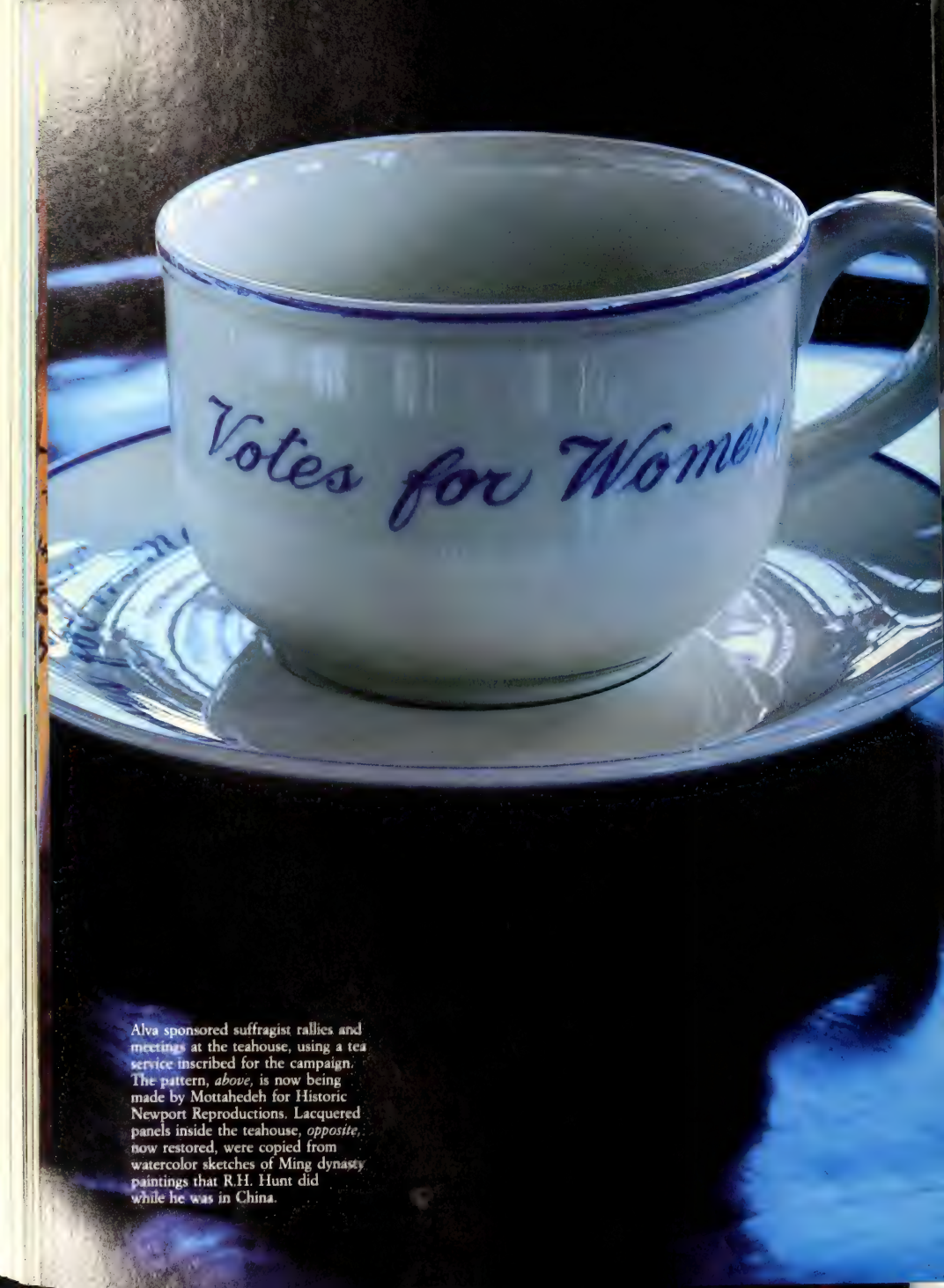
In Alva's generation R.H. Hunt's father, Richard Morris Hunt, was the premier architect. As a young man he had fled industrializing America to immerse himself in a disciplined study of the Classical arts. He traveled extensively, apprenticed as an architect, and spent nine years at the École des Beaux-Arts, where the rigorous training emphasized historic and stylistic accuracy. When Hunt returned to the United States, in 1870, he was well versed in a range of Classical and European styles that were to prove ideally suited to the artistic and social inclinations of turn-of-the- *(Text continued on page 187)*

The teahouse is Chinese in inspiration and detail, incorporating elements from different periods with some twentieth-century adaptations. The architects added transom windows to the hipped roof; Alva herself chose the roof figures, favoring the most elaborate scheme offered.



The interior is bright and busy with calligraphy, decorative moldings, lacquerwork, and windows that frame the sea and sky with ten different patterns. From the room that Alva knew, only the porcelain Chinese dogs remain; the lanterns originally hung from eaves around the perimeter of the teahouse.

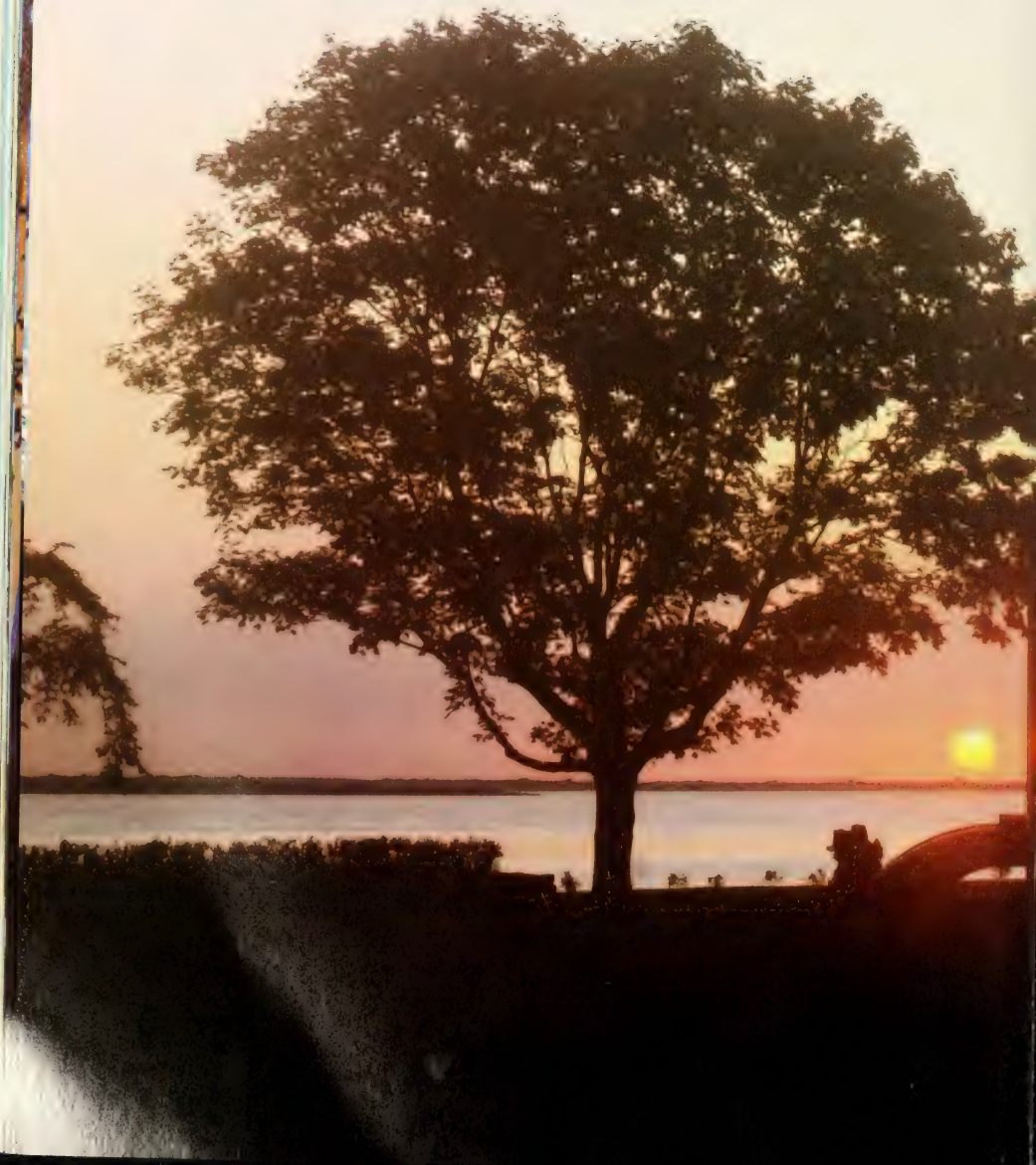




Alva sponsored suffragist rallies and meetings at the teahouse, using a tea service inscribed for the campaign. The pattern, *above*, is now being made by Mottahedeh for Historic Newport Reproductions. Lacquered panels inside the teahouse, *opposite*, now restored, were copied from watercolor sketches of Ming dynasty paintings that R.H. Hunt did while he was in China.



The Chinese teahouse, restored by The Preservation Society of Newport County, is used much as Alva Belmont intended: as a retreat from the grandeur of Marble House and for occasional parties. It is generally open from May to October.





Right: On the north façade of La Casa Rotonda is the massive brick column with capital that holds the staircase. Entrance to house is on west side of ground floor; on east side is a carport. *Opposite below:* Architect's sketch of the village where the house stands.

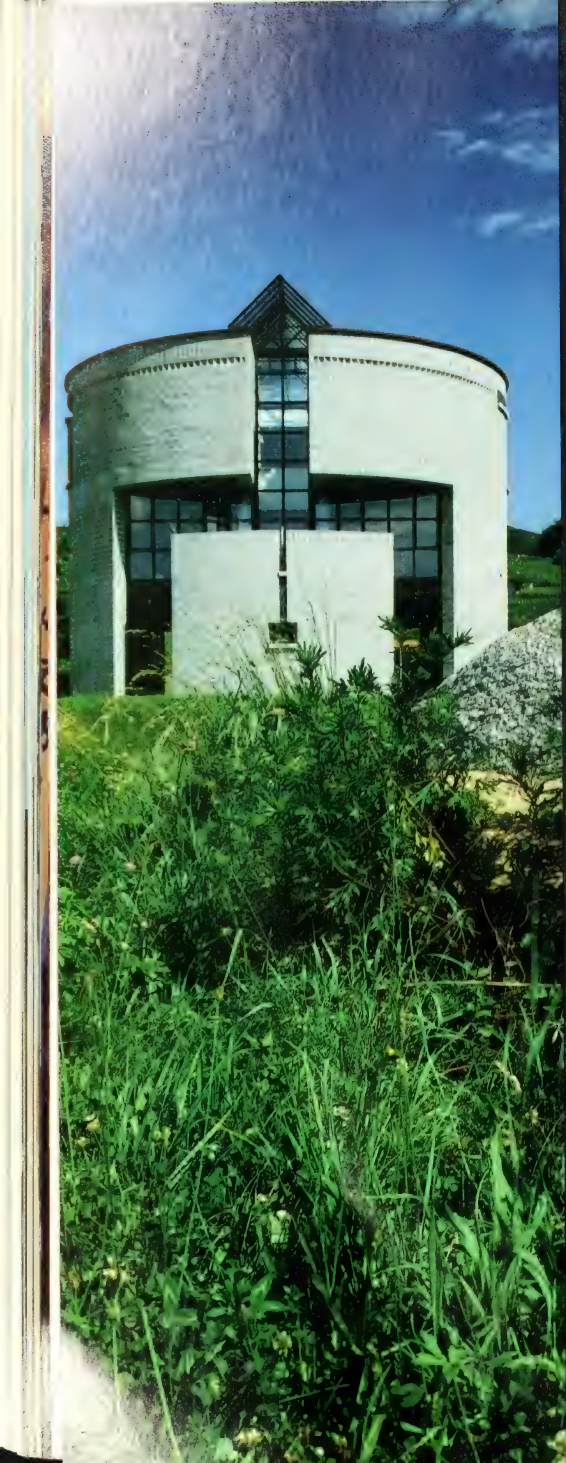


CASA ROTONDA

In an ordinary-looking village in his own country, Swiss architect Mario Botta builds an extraordinary house—a cylinder sliced in two by light

BY LIVIO DIMITRIU

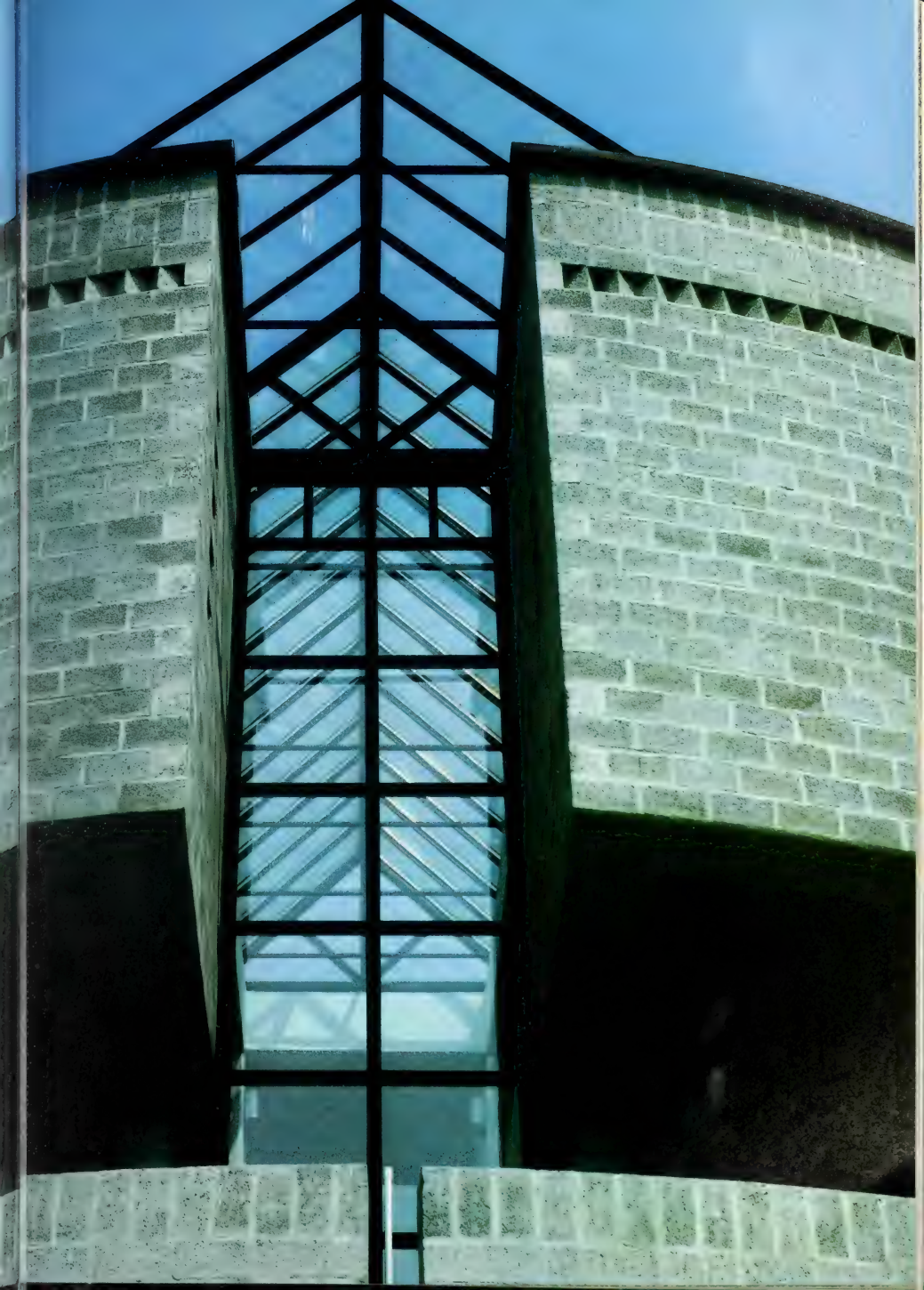
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALO ZANETTA



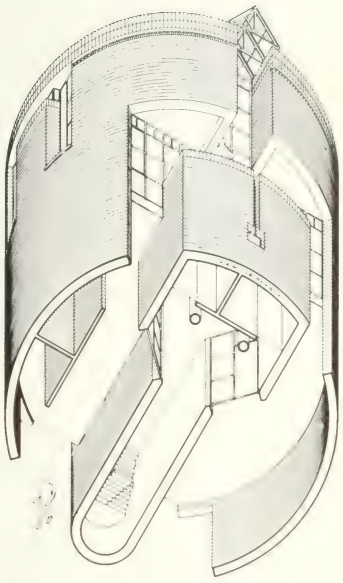
The choice of simple, almost humble materials is for Botta the formal expression of an understanding of how to live

The south façade clearly supports Botta's description of the house as "a cylinder sliced in two by light from the heavens." The original plan had a rounded skylight, changed in favor of one echoing the lines of a conventional pitched roof.





Left: A view from the staircase—"the point of convergence of this whole composition in space," says Botta—to the third-floor landing and the second-floor living area. Metal grid is black iron. *Right:* Axonometric view of the north elevation from below.



Mario Botta completed his very first built project, with Studio Tita Carloni, when he was seventeen years old. A few years and several buildings later, he came to be known as the *enfant terrible* of European architecture. Now forty, this architect from the Italian-speaking canton of Ticino, Switzerland, has ascended to the position of master builder and leading proponent of *La Tendenza* (the Italian Neo-Rationalist movement), and his designs, though famous, are still controversial. An articulate explainer of his beliefs and goals, he has built his reputation on prolific production—"without quantity there is no continuity": an ability to get his designs impeccably built—"any material, if handled properly, can assume the dignity equal to that of marble or gold"; and an obsession with the nature of habitation—"making architecture signifies above all the search for a new equilibrium between man and his surroundings."

Botta's aesthetic is a unique amalgam of historical references, including his own surroundings, where he has built many of his houses, the northern Italian architectural heritage, and his education, which gave him invaluable exposure to three masters of the Modern Movement. He graduated with a thesis under Carlo Scarpa, whom he calls a "great poet of materials." He worked on the Venice Congress Hall project with Louis Kahn, from whom he got "the most regarding an approach to architecture." And he also worked with Atelier Le Corbusier, "practically the essence of the history of the Modern Movement in architecture." Botta eschews Post Modernism, whose historical nods he finds fragmented and arbitrary. This architect wants never to lose sight of the totality of history, and the need for man to distill from it the best way to live in his own time.

Botta's houses are all constructed of simple materials and with simple geometric forms, and they all relate to the landscape and culture in which they belong. While observers in Swiss communities have, at first, found Botta's houses "disturbing," the occupants





themselves feel that they are "home" in the complete sense of the word. La Casa Rotonda, or the Round House, at Stabio, Switzerland, is among Botta's latest tours de force. Unlike the Botta houses in spectacular Swiss landscapes, this one was to be set in rather flat, uninteresting land and surrounded by other houses that were, at best, undistinguished. The situation forced the architect to "search . . . for a spatial relationship with the distant landscape and horizon. By using a cylindrical volume I wanted to avoid elevations that would necessarily have to be compared to the façades of the existing houses around it." The result is a building that appears to have sprung from the earth, one that echoes the distant mountains, and even seems to draw them near.

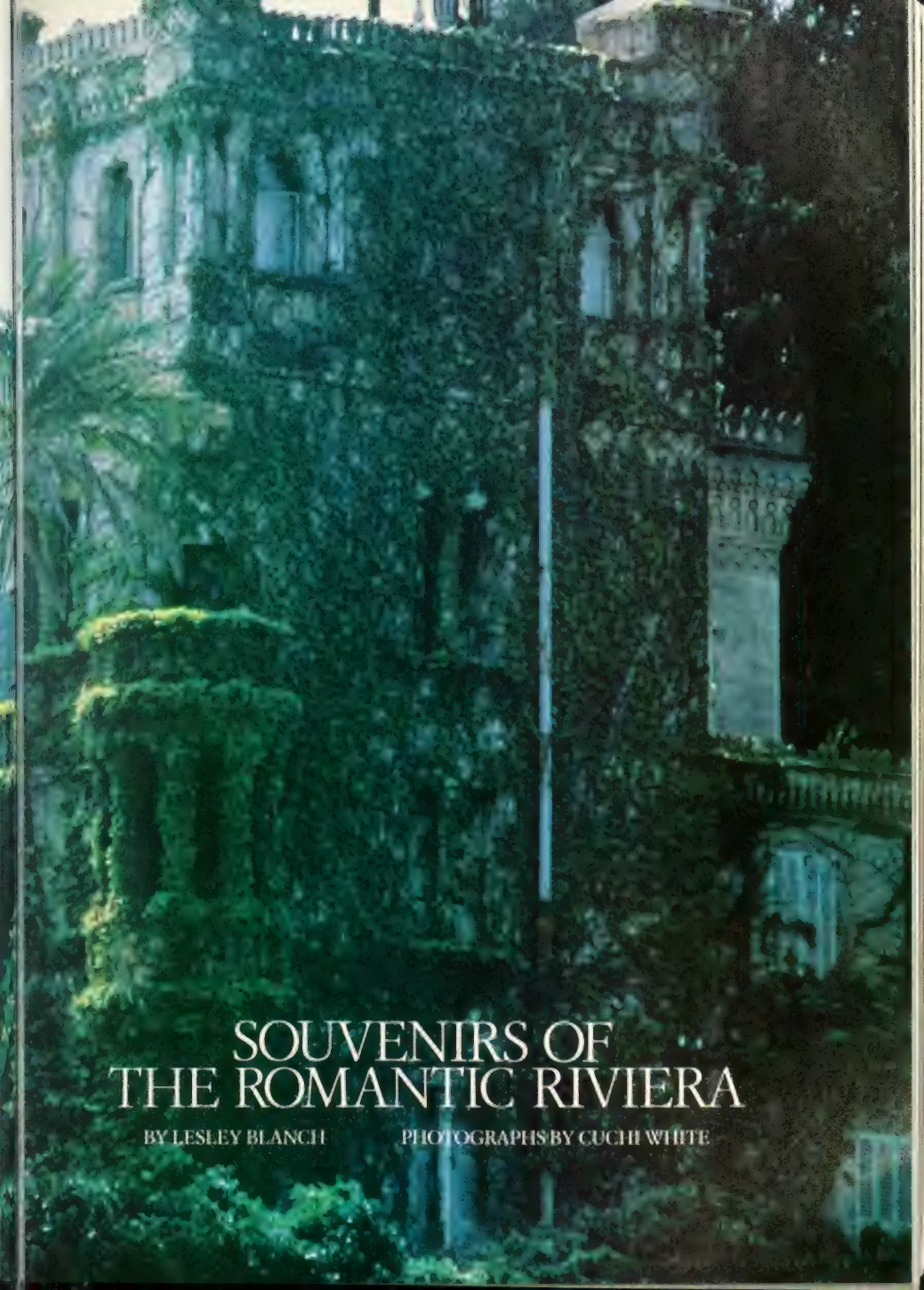
The internal spaces of the house are structured along a clear understanding of the Corbusian lesson: the ground floor is the place of entry only, with semi-enclosed areas for storage of firewood and for parking. The middle floor contains the living spaces, such as family room, dining room, kitchen, and study. The top floor has the master and children's bedrooms. The spatial and functional organization is perceived from the access road to the house, through the great cut-out in the façade, and is further stressed by the presence of the circulation tower, reminiscent of a classical column, placed along the north-south axis. At the intimate scale of the house, this axis is marked by a glass skylight, which illuminates the double-story spaces of the top two floors. The presence of this device is not only an example of the formalism of *La Tendenza* but acts by virtue of its orientation as an intelligent passive solar energy collector.

Like the modest external walls, the inner partitions are of concrete brick but are painted white instead of gray. In the living room, the delicately woven parquet floor is laid out in diagonals that meet at the north-south axis, supporting *(Text continued on page 203)*

Casa Rotonda's skylight runs the length of the north-south axis of the house and pulls in light that illuminates two stories: the bedrooms on the top floor, *above left,* and the living and dining areas on the second floor, *top left* and *right.*







SOUVENIRS OF THE ROMANTIC RIVIERA

BY LESLEY BLANCH PHOTOGRAPHS BY CUCHI WHITE





Mediterranean shores are generally associated with languor—with *dolce far niente*. But there must have been something particularly stimulating about that narrow, glittering strand known as the Côte d'Azur, for the enraptured strangers, dwellers from harsher climates, who discovered it during the nineteenth century were seized with a passion for building. They came, and they built—uncontrollably, extravagantly—ignoring the old houses of the region. These houses—with their simple charm, pink- or yellow-washed walls, gray-shuttered, often frescoed both inside and out with cupids, roses, and ribboned trelliswork—were set aside or demolished to make way for the most improbable structures, exotic, classic, or fantastic, which were crowned by the more restrained yet fabulously luxurious houses designed by a Niçois architect, Sebastien-Marcel Biasini. The sumptuous style that he evolved became known as Riviera Belle Époque, perfectly suited to the princes, financiers, and *grandes cocottes* who are associated with this extravagant era.

Yet both the first fantastic structures and the achievements of Biasini have come, in turn, to be set aside, abandoned, or demolished, making way for even more improbable structures—today's high-rise, skyscraping, barracklike hotels or cramped apartment blocks, which in terms of cement and steel now overwhelm the Côte d'Azur. Perhaps their uninspired uniformity suits the unselective uniformity of today's come-and-go population, whose chief preoccupation appears to be a fast car and a quick tan. Gone, the former elegances. Gone, the former roots. Gone, those "hidden places and silent heights" that inspired Nietzsche to write *Beyond Good and Evil* at Èze.

Let us look back, nostalgically, to that salmagundi of architectural

Preceding pages: Closed for the past 22 years, Château Robert was built circa 1870 in Golfe-Juan by an unknown architect for Ferdinand Dervieu, the Counsel General of France at Hamburg. *Left:* Villa Beau Site in Mont Baron, Nice, was the fantasy of a London merchant and represents the very essence of the style of Sebastien-Marcel Biasini.



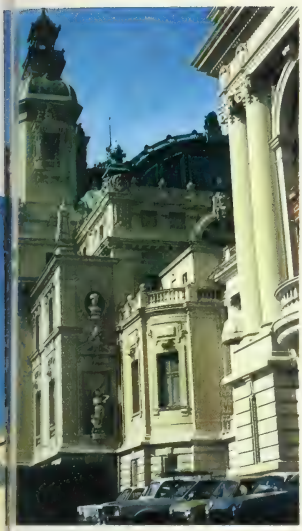
Clockwise from top left: A seagull frieze from a house in Menton, circa 1906; soon to be torn down, La Djezair, a Moorish house in Juan-les-Pins with an interior reminiscent of the Alhambra; Château de l'Anglais, built in 1856 for Colonel Robert Smith at Point des Sans Culottes in Nice, is now an apartment house; a happy compromise between an Italian villa and a Parisian *hôtel particulier,* Les Coccinelles, at Mont Boron, was built in 1881; built circa 1900, this house in Le Cannet was recently destroyed.

















Clockwise from top left: Casino de Monte Carlo, begun in 1858, remodeled by Charles Garnier in 1878; destroyed in 1982, Château de la Paix was built in 1862 by August Chauvain, who had hoped Napoleon III and Camillo Cavour of Italy would meet there. Roofing is a tile seen in Beaune; now apartments, the crenelated Château Scott in Cannes was built in 1862 for Michael Hughes Scott of Glasgow. Marcel L'Herbier made the film *Mystère de la Chambre Jaune* here; a Moorish house in Hyères.

styles—now monuments to the imagination and daring of a vanished age. Frowning battlemented castles, something between Scottish baronial and "le style Troubadour" of medieval France, were beside princely Baroque mansions or Gothic-Renaissance loggias recalling Venetian palazzos. The florid Indo-Portuguese style known as Manuelino nudged Moorish villas, their domes and arches and fretted moucharabiyehs no doubt inspired by late French colonial conquests in North Africa.

As early as 1858, an English army officer, Colonel Robert Smith, created the enchanted domain known as the Château de l'Anglais, which is still to be seen overlooking the harbor of Nice. The Colonel had served in India, and the bulbous turrets, minarets, and fanciful trimmings he commanded echoed his vanished Hindu life. Although now cut up into apartments, and painted an unfortunate liverwurst pink instead of the classic Indian hue, a faint whiff of curry and lotus seems to linger here.

Farther along the coast, at Beaulieu, the brothers Théodore and Solomon Reinach created the Villa Kerylos, their flawless reconstruction of a fourth-century B.C. Greek dwelling, replete with the suitable lares and penates. This is now a museum—a happy fate denied most of the other fabled houses of this region. A few are classified house exhibitions, or serve as overflow quarters for university students. Some stand abandoned awaiting their bulldozer doom. Behind locked gates, in overgrown gardens, their blank windows seem to stare out reproachfully from encroaching tangles of vegetation. Gone, the formal parterres, the velvet lawns and graveled drives. Gone, the summerhouses and winter gardens beloved of the Belle Époque . . . vanished with the rose. . . .

To the newcomers in this halcyon land, for so it once was, expense mattered little. They generally possessed large fortunes and vast estates elsewhere, and like spoiled children, regarded the Côte d'Azur as some fascinating new playground where every whim could be gratified. Thus the private palaces, majestic hotels, patrician châteaux, and elegant *manoirs* proliferated, and between 1880 and the turn of the century reached their apotheosis in the concepts of Sebastien-Marcel Biasini, Charles Dalmas, and others.

Such opulence! Marble halls were reflected ad infinitum in mirrored perspectives. Statued parks, ornamental waterways, gazebos, ballrooms, and private theaters (one commanded the services of eight hundred musicians) were surpassed by the refulgent splendors of the small Opera House—a princely toy—which Charles Garnier (of Paris Opera House renown) designed at Monte Carlo in 1879.

Together with the adjoining Casino and the Hotel de Paris (by Jacobi), a triumvirate of Belle Époque elegance was formed. Round it the famous, the rich, the royal, and the raffish congregated. Figures larger than life who swayed world events were habitués of the Côte d'Azur—then. The mysterious armaments king Sir Basil Zaharoff, J. Pierpont Morgan, the Aga Khan, deposed majesties, grand dukes, press lords, and financiers. The foxy old King Leopold of the Belgians was at the Leopolda, his lovely domain overlooking Beaulieu; the Rothschilds and Efrussis at Villefranche. The wayward Empress Elizabeth of Austria among the pines at Cap Martin, where the ex-Empress Eugénie built the Villa Cyrnos "for her old age" (she was already over eighty). Next door, Madame Stern's bizarre Byzantine-Venetian house, all mosaics, gargoyles, and cloisters, had its own little harbor for visitors who came by yacht.

Only the most superb hotels could cater for the exigencies of this beau monde. The Winter Palace, the Alhambra, and the Imperial outdid each other in magnificence. At Cimiez, the colossal Excelsior-Regina became Queen Victoria's choice for her annual spring holiday. She engaged an entire wing, installing her own furniture, staff, and chef, besides a pet donkey to pull her bathchair. Alas! The holiday was sometimes clouded by rumors of "Bertie's" behavior at Monte Carlo or Cannes. Bertie, soon to succeed her, as King Edward VII, was also enjoying the Côte d'Azur, but on other terms, gambling and supping with the demimonde, the international bankers, and the *grandes cocottes* who were kept i such style. La Belle Otero (with her 4 centimeter waist, among othe charms), Cléo de Mérode, Liane d Pougy, and Émilienne d'Alençon le the field among numbers of lesser *gra des horizontales,* as such courtesa were aptly described.

But these figures of the past, now remote, as mythical as figures on an a cient tapestry, remain the personifica tion of Belle Époque architecture, jus as the Côte d'Azur—then—represen ed the time and the place where th monied pursuit of pleasure was whole way of life—unquestioned.

Then, as now, the Côte d'Azur ha few artistic traditions of its own. N great works of art stem from this re gion. Its soil has never produced Goya, a Botticelli, or a Turner. Th scarlet thread of genius that can b traced throughout the provinces o France, leaving a noble heritage of pic tures, châteaux, and cathedrals, seem to have stopped short of this smilin shore. Although the Brea family, orig inally from Nice, were celebrated a painters of the region, like van Loo o Fragonard at Grasse, such artists as Re noir, Matisse, or Picasso, whom we as sociate with the Riviera, were, in fact residents, but not natives.

Nevertheless, it was in the essentiall frivolous ambience of Monte Carl that some of the great theatrical tri umphs of the nineteenth century wer launched. In Garnier's gilded bon-bo of a theater, Wagner's music was firs heard outside Germany. There, Cha liapin sang, there Nijinsky danced, an there some of Diaghilev's most marvel ous ballets were first applauded b bejeweled audiences.

Which brings me to the Russians for they became an integral part of life along the *(Text continued on page 183)*

Opposite top: The Nice water company built in 1882 in the style of a Swis chalet, overlooks La Cascade Gairaut *Opposite:* An exact replica of Missir Djenne in Senegal, Mosqueé de Fréju was built circa 1930 to keep u the spirits of the colonial troops in th army camp near Cais. All picture are by Cuchi White from a new book: *Rêveuse Riviera* by Michel Buto (Editions Georges Herscher, Paris)





A COUNTRY LOFT

Architect Keith Kroeger's surprising white-on-white barn in Westchester County

BY HEATHER MACISAAC

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADAM BARTOS

Keith Kroeger is a collector of "found objects." He is also an architect, partner in the firm Ulrich Franzen/Keith Kroeger and Associates, so it comes as no surprise that the plum of his collection these days is his house, a barn built in 1879 in Westchester County, New York, which he shares with his new wife, Susan, and their four children.

Several years ago, newly divorced, Kroeger moved from an English-cottage-style house in Scarsdale to temporary quarters in an apartment. Now was the right time to think about his ideal home. Like most architects, he wanted a place that would inspire and accommodate experimentation. Drawn to both the large open spaces of a city loft and the greenery and spaciousness of the country, Kroeger seemed to be seeking the impossible. But perseverance and a timely mention to a friend who dabbled in real estate



Large window at left overlooks what the Kroegers call "the ruin," an area where cows were once milked. Red Pegasus, brought back from an abandoned filling station in Vermont, enlivens the wall of the studio/garage. *Utopia* is by Cletus Johnson.

UTOPIA

This page: A hay trolley at the peak of the gable, which once transferred hay from wagon to barn floor, now keeps company with other treasured objects. Flanking the fireplace are a rooster windmill weight and a folk-art piece entitled *The Mother-in-Law*. Flattened beer cans sit atop a framed photograph. *Opposite:* The east façade overlooks the old cow path, now Route 117.




117



Opposite: Purposefully circuitous route to the bedroom past *Saratoga,* a painting by Sidney Guberman, creates unexpected stops and interesting vistas. *Above:* "Door to nowhere" in bedroom aligns with an outer window so that the full volume of the barn and a view to the outside is never lost. The arrangement of the Josef Albers lithographs echoes the lines of the diagonal bracing. Sculpture at foot of bed is *Bouinerge* by Sidney Guberman.

turned up his dream design laboratory, an abandoned barn in the suburbs.

Since objects that no one else values are closest to Kroeger's heart, the barn was a perfect candidate for his sympathetic attitude and architectural skills. The building was in derelict shape. Partitions and a low dropped ceiling divided the space awkwardly and masked its lofty height. But Kroeger saw only potential. He delighted in the fact that "everything was crooked," with neither 45-degree angles nor straight edges to conform to. As he suspected, removing the false ceiling and partitions revealed the barn's natural assets, the heavy timbers of post-and-beam construction and a simple and impressive volume.

Bringing this beautiful volume to light was for Kroeger an essential operation, one that involved two major steps. Unlike houses on most suburban lots, which are centered by building codes, the barn is situated in the northeast corner of its one-acre lot, which afforded the possibility for expansive views to the south and west. To take advantage of this, Kroeger opened up the sunniest façades by adding new windows on either side of the fireplace and removing a covered porch, replacing the French doors that led out to it with one large window. Light from the east streams across the kitchen and dining areas in the morning through old windows that Kroeger happily saved —they were "found objects" of an earlier age, rescued from buildings slated for demolition and installed by actress Mildred Dunnock and her husband Keith Urmy, who in the thirties converted the barn into a residence and a theater for the local drama group.

Kroeger's next and most daring step was to paint the entire barn white. The volume blossomed; the light took on new animation. Specific functional elements were also painted white—the stairs, the nineteen-foot-long built-in table, the bed platform—and became smaller freestanding objects within the bigger object, the barn itself. The Kroegers' ever-changing collection of found objects and works by artist friends contributes color and focus on a smaller scale.

Giving new life to the physical features of the barn influenced Kroeger's other design decisions. He could not resist creating a hayloft for the master bedroom, where one can lie under the slope of the roof and track the stars through a skylight above the bed. The route to the room also evokes the adventure and playfulness of being in a



barn—up a ladderlike, railless stair to the study on the landing and through a small side door. Once in the bedroom, one is drawn to what Kroeger calls "the door to nowhere," an opening that gives a hayloft view of the entire living area. A knee-high sheet of plexiglass checks the urge to jump; still, from the living room, one can imagine a child poised at the edge, ready to leap to a mattress of hay below. Through this slot in the wall is the only view of the dramatic length of the barn.

How does it feel to live in such a grand, bright space? Kroeger is happy with the balance of private and public places and amused that although he and Susan have their hayloft and the children have their own lower floor, the family is usually competing for room at the long table. But the most exciting and gratifying aspect of the house is decidedly its whiteness. Like an enveloping abstract canvas, the barn continues to evolve, to adopt different spatial functions and take on the colors and characters of the seasons.

For Susan, a free-lance writer, the house is the art gallery she has always wanted to live in, an unselfconscious building with an element of surprise, at once minimalist and theatrical. (Last fall, the barn was the setting for an art exhibition, and the Kroegers have thought of offering it again to the local drama group for an occasional performance.) Susan finds the white a flattering backdrop for people; their colors provide the decoration. For Keith's two older children away at school, coming home has moved from the ordinary to the exotic, and for Susan's two younger children, ages twelve and sixteen, being home is "like living in a snowstorm," something amusing and different from their friends' houses.

That the barn so gracefully reflects the family confirms Kroeger's belief that a house can fully participate in the lives of its occupants. His initial experiments, he hopes, are only the groundwork for a laboratory that will continue to bring forth the unexpected. □ *Produced by Elizabeth Sverbeyeff Byron*

Marking weights, a pickax head, and a home shoe-repair gadget form an abstract grouping on table extending from kitchen to living area. Drawings of hearts and heart sculpture by Ernest Shaw. Stone head in foreground was found underwater in the Caribbean.



Left: In the living room, the composer's Yamaha piano strewn with his charts. *Opposite:* The front patio of Bobby Lamm's canyon house in Beverly Hills. Under the awning, Mexican pigskin-and-wood seating, bird-of-paradise trees.

CHICAGO SOUND, CALIFORNIA COMFORT

BY ELAINE GREENE PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHARLES WHITE

"I'm going on the road in June and I'll be back in August," said Bobby Lamm, a member and founder of the famous rock group Chicago, to interior designer Michael Kreiss, handing him the keys to his Beverly Hills bungalow. "Do what is best for the house." This was not as blind a directive as it might seem, since Lamm liked the Kreiss work he had seen and liked the home-furnishings style of the Kreiss Collection, source of nearly everything in the redecorated house: furniture, lamps, planters, even bed linens. And because both men are dedicated Southern Californians, they shared an understanding of the local requirements for domestic contentment. A satisfactory L.A. house provides complete comfort, big-scale furnishings, total access to the outdoors, and plants everywhere.

The size of the seating is related to comfort because ample, deep, feet-up chairs and sofas are what people demand in this informal part of the world. The large accessories are another matter—the huge trees in the huge pots, the thick slabs of tabletops Some people say that only big masses can stand up to the brilliant Southern California sunlight; others say the nearness of Hollywood and the influence of set design determine this look, which appears even in rooms that are small.

Bobby Lamm's canyon house consists of six modest-sized rooms in a plan that centers on a raised dining room. From anywhere inside, a few steps take him to the luxuriantly planted front and back gardens. Only one other house can be glimpsed, from





Another view of the living room. Decorator Michael Kreiss had all the floors bleached for an enveloping whiteness. Natural colors, vegetable and mineral, are accents.



Right: The bedroom is the only nonwhite room in the bungalow, but plenty of white objects and fabrics brighten the dark greens. The wall color sets off the Gold and Platinum Chicago albums (Gold means a half-million units sold; Platinum means a million units sold). A new album is due in January 1984. *Below:* Bobby Lamm, back from the road.

only one of the windows.

Chicago plays about one hundred concerts a year, so "a private refuge"—in Bobby Lamm's words—is "the place I want to come home to." He savors the freshness of the gardens, the cool, pampering interior, the solitude shared only by his visiting six-year-old.

Bobby Lamm also works in his house. He is not only the keyboard artist and a vocalist with Chicago, but also the composer of most of their music and lyrics. A current hit is "Hard to Say I'm Sorry," and one of his first was "Does Anybody Really Know What Time It Is?" dating back to 1969, Chicago's third year of existence. (Six of the eight current musicians were in the group from the beginning.) In addition to the piano—the only piece of furniture Kreiss told Lamm to choose himself—Lamm uses several polyphonic synthesizers, a drum synthesizer, a four-track recording deck, and a mixer in his at-home composing.

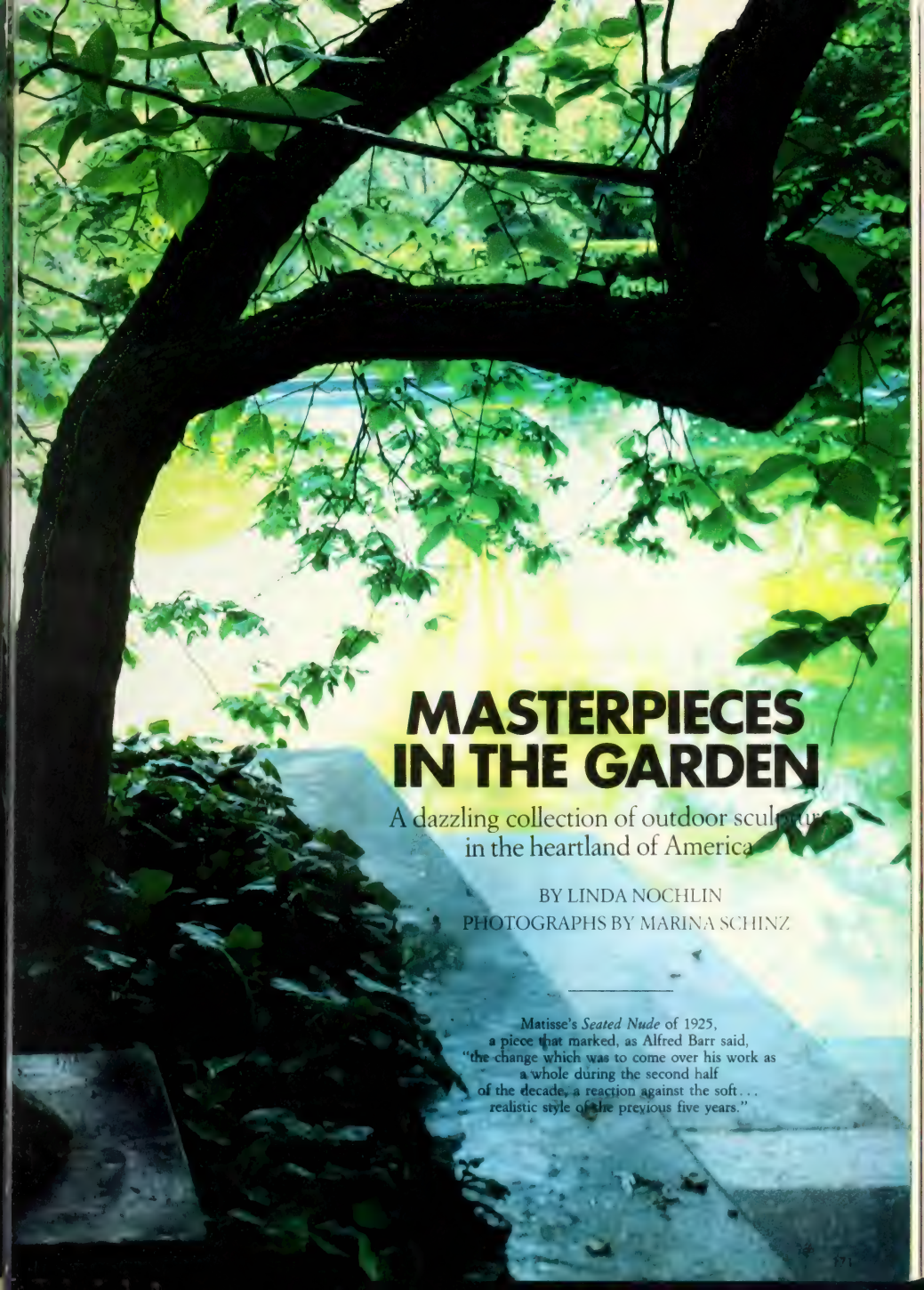
Whatever else sustains this exceptionally long-lived musical group, it is clear that a private refuge in the canyon is attuned to member Bobby Lamm's deepest needs. □ *Produced by Joyce MacRae*



BONNIE SCHIFFMAN







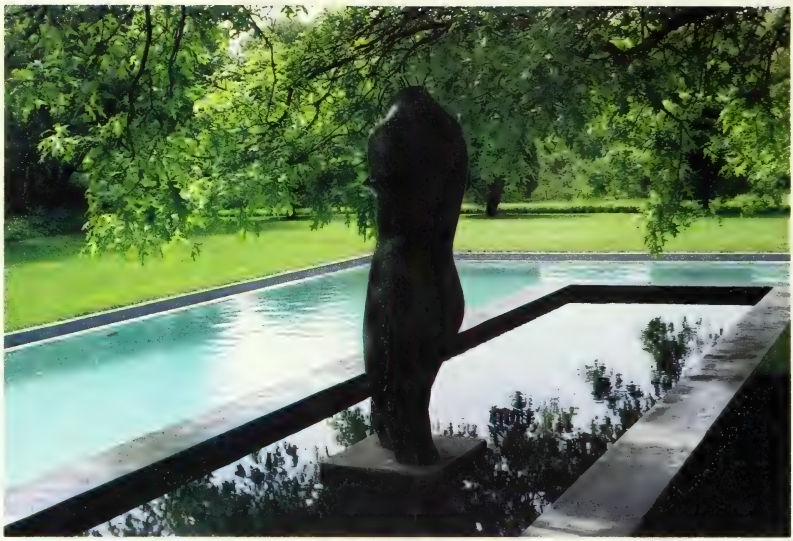
MASTERPIECES IN THE GARDEN

A dazzling collection of outdoor sculpture in the heartland of America

BY LINDA NOCHLIN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARINA SCHINZ

Matisse's *Seated Nude* of 1925, a piece that marked, as Alfred Barr said, "the change which was to come over his work as a whole during the second half of the decade, a reaction against the soft... realistic style of the previous five years."



Opposite: Donald Judd's *Untitled* of 1970 in stainless steel was commissioned for a site in the garden near the red stable.
Above: Charles Despiau's bronze *Torso of a Young Woman* reveals his debt to Rodin, with whom he worked as an assistant for five years

One of the most remarkable private collections of modern sculpture in this country flourishes in the spacious green shelter of a splendid Midwestern garden. Ranging from the classically representational to the most minimalist contemporary, the sculpture and its setting of grass, foliage, trees, and water create a harmonious ambience of pastoral eloquence. Rolling lawns, rough meadows, shady groves, and sunny copses are constantly brought into sharper visual focus by major works of art. Art and nature work together in this garden to create magical effects that neither of them could achieve separately. There is a tradition for this sort of poetic blending of the natural and the artificial, of course—the Tuileries and the Luxembourg gardens in Paris; the Boboli in Florence; Louisiana in Denmark; Storm King in this country—but nowhere has it been achieved with a greater sense of effortless refinement than here, unexpectedly, in America's heartland.

Around the house, the more manicured portion of the garden provides an appropriate setting for the more traditional pieces from the collection. Here, clipped hedges, neat lawns, measured *allées,* and two rectangular pools create a properly civilized surrounding for the Maillols, the Rodin, the Matisse, and the Despiau torso, the latter movingly isolated on a square base above the austere geometric mirror of its reflecting pool. In the area, the bronzes often establish a subtle, seemingly fortuitous, formal and expressive rapport with each other. Auguste Rodin's heroically melancholy *Shade,* released from the Gate of Hell but still bowed down under the weight of internally generated pressure, prepares the visitor with its self-contained energy for the exuberant outward flowing physical vitality of Henri Matisse's *Seated Nude,* one of the jewels of the collection. Created in 1925, this boldly simplified bronze female figure, her arms clasped behind her head in the time-honored pose of sexual seduction, is vividly echoed by the twisting branches of the tree behind her. Aristide Maillol's *Torso, Study for Venus,* 1925, reminds us that formal perfection is not merely a goal of abstract Modernism. The cool exactitude of the contours, the calibrated equilibrium of the anatomical elements, especially the beautifully calculated relationship between the bent leg, the raised arms, and the slightly turned head that subtly emphasizes the dominating central axis of the work, are all set off to perfection by the lush, light-flecked *(Text continued on page 180)*







One of the three triangular Cor-Ten plates from Richard Serra's *Untitled* of 1971 rises out of an open meadow. The piece has to be viewed from many sides as only one, or at the most two, parts can be seen from any given angle.





Mark di Suvero's monumental and mobile *For Rilke*, 1976, was the first major piece made in the artist's Petaluma studio in California after his return from France.



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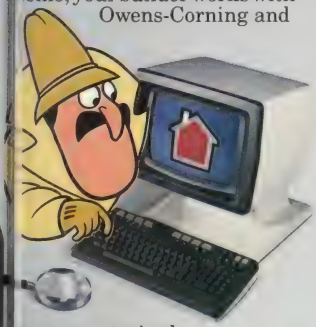
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Clockwise from top left: In the foreground, Maillol's *Torso, Study for Venus* of 1925, cast in 1960, and behind it, Arp's *Torso,* 1957, in bronze; Andrea Cascella's *Jupiter* of 1964, in rough granite, sits in rough grass; Jacques Lipschitz's figure of 1926–30 in bronze stands over seven feet; Maillol's *Venus,* 1918–1928, in bronze; Rodin's *Shade* from 1889; Bryan Hunt's *Shift,* 1978.

(Continued from page 172) greenery behind the figure, a fall of foliage that, from certain angles, transforms this modest, tranquil bronze goddess into a kind of Danaë, drenched in a shower of sparkling green rather than gold. Behind Maillol's figure, the female body is provocatively reduced to a biomorphic slither of sun-dappled bronze by Jean Arp in his *Torso,* its condensed, glittery curves screened by a rich but regular pattern or leafage.

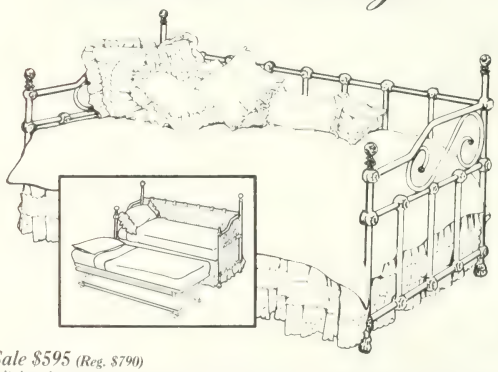
A shadowy, overgrown grove lends its mystery to the rough-hewn stone monoliths of Andrea Cascella's fallen *Jupiter* of 1964, a work that evokes the archaic grandeur of the distant historic or even prehistoric past, suggesting the menhirs of Brittany or the nostalgia of the fallen columns at Olympia or Paestum in their overgrown sacred precincts. Nothing could be more dramatically different from Cascella's nostalgic self-containment of form and mood than the harsh, outthrust, aggressively industrial brilliance of the fireman-red steel beams of Mark di Suvero's *For Rilke* of 1976. Perched on a sunny, grass-covered knoll, the piece seems ready to take off in all directions, airborne with its own centrifugal dynamism. Still another kind of dynamism, and a different kind of relationship between sculpture and setting, is established by Richard Serra's tripartite *Untitled* of 1971. In this case, the sculptor worked a long time studying the site itself in order to achieve his provocative integration of sculpture and surroundings. Set in an open meadow, the work immediately involves the viewer in a self-conscious awareness of his relationship to the natural environment and the trajectory of evolving *(Continued on page 182)*

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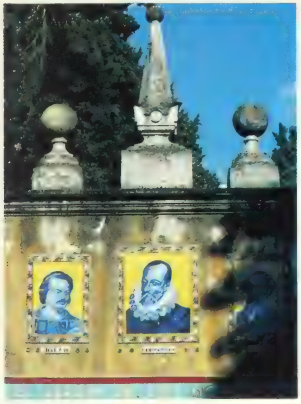
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MASTERPIECES IN THE GARDEN

(Continued from page 181) perceptio of the sculptural object within it. Th piece, made up of three triangles o Cor-Ten steel, absolutely demand that the spectator view it from a variet of vantage points over a period of time (In this respect, one might say that Ser ra's conception of the sculptural ex perience is as "mobile" as Alexande Calder's; it's just that in Serra's case, i is the spectator rather than the sculp ture that provides the movement.) De pending on where the spectator stands the three steel plates may be exper ienced as a line or as a plane surface; as a barrier or as a connection; as a form rising from or sinking down into the meadow, which grounds the work.

If Serra's minimalist work is dynam ic and changing, Donald Judd's *Untitled* (Topographical Sculpture) of 1970 is deliberately, ruthlessly self-contained and limited. Judd, like Serra, designed the work for a specific location in the garden, where it was intended to provide a central focus for the relatively free-form landscaping of an informal area. Despite its rigorous simplicity, Judd's piece—which consists of two stainless steel boxes, one slightly tilted and contained within the other—nevertheless depends for its effectiveness on the shifting position of the observer. Seen directly from in front, the sculpture looks like a simple, flat plane. Standing above it, however, one becomes aware of the complexity of the relationship between the inner and outer shells, their destabilizing tilt determined in part by the gentle slope of the setting itself. And nature has deliberately been permitted to play its role in underlining the authoritative formality of this work—or rather, in undermining this authority, however one wishes to look at it: grass and weeds sprout at its very heart, penetrating the geometric core of the inner box with their burgeoning organic formlessness. In a sense, Judd's stark, aggressively "meaningless" piece has become a metaphor in spite of itself: a metaphor, in the traditional sense, for the triumph of time over man's works, but also for the willing conspiracy between discipline and spontaneity, artistic will and natural growth, geometric rigor and relaxed lyricism, which is the secret of this marvelous sculpture garden's magical harmony. □ *Produced by Beatrice Monti della Corte*

Behind locked gates, in overgrown gardens, the blank windows seem to stare out reproachfully from encroaching tangles of vegetation



Balzac and Cervantes stare out from a wall in the garden of Fontana Rosa, Menton, built in 1923 by exiled Spanish writer Blasco Ibañez.

(Continued from page 154) Côte d'Azur, occupying a special place among the inhabitants. The excesses of the grand dukes, princes, and merchant princes knew no bounds. Some arrived in their own private trains, direct from Saint Petersburg, accompanied by cohorts of servitors, mountains of luggage, and homely adjuncts such as samovars and pickled cucumbers, without which all Russians, whatever their status, felt deprived.

In any case, whether such Slav Croesuses or a flotsam of fellow countrymen who were later cast up there by ill-luck at the tables, the tragic years of war or political banishment, the Russians did not feel themselves exiled. They might become hangers-on, trading on their titles, running sad little restaurants or working as dressmakers, but they were at home there.

Something of their Slav roots had bloomed round them. The impressive Orthodox cathedral built by the Russian architect Preobrajensky recalls the barbaric flamboyance of Moscow's Saint Basil, and remains a landmark in Nice. The blue cupolas and gilded crowns of smaller Orthodox churches had sometimes begun as chapels on the grounds of some princely domain, where the owner had also planted the trees of his homeland. Thus somber firs and the silvery, "cold-place loving birch" of the Russian poet are still found among the olives and mimosa, like that small gingerbread carved wooden dacha, a typical Russian cottage orné, brought plank by plank across the steppes to gratify the whim of that Slav seigneur who kept such state at the Château Valrose.

Phantoms are said to haunt certain houses; but here, among the skeletal remains of those "Grandes Demeures Aristocratiques," is it not the houses themselves, having become phantoms in their own right, which haunt us as we pass by? □

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LONG NECK POINT

Overlooking Long Island Sound in Darien, Connecticut, this summer colony was the preserve of two remarkable families

By Christopher Gray

A mile-and-a-half long, but less than a half-mile wide, Long Neck Point in Darien, Connecticut, is like a huge yacht—a road straight down the middle its central corridor, houses on either side its outside staterooms. The approach to the Point is an elegant progression: an unmarked turn off the Boston Post Road, the old coastal highway, past St. Luke's Episcopal Church, where well-scrubbed children play on swings and teeter-totters, down Rings End Road with its brightly painted nineteenth-century houses, across a small bridge and past the Ziegler farm, with sheep and livestock milling around a huge stone barn.

Beyond the farm, the air changes, and you realize you are nearly surrounded by water. The road continues straight down to the tip, with none of the fancy twists and turns of the landlocked areas: here, as on board a ship, space is at a premium, and the road is purely functional. Although there are a few sandy spots, the Point is primarily a rocky outcrop, and it meets the water abruptly, with a high sea wall and occasional wooden piers. Most of Long Neck Point itself is thirty feet above the water, and you have the feeling of being on a ship's bridge, just setting out from shore. With an onshore wind and waves breaking across the tip, the character of the Point as a great boat is completed.

On the east side, the houses face Long Island Sound, with its dreamy haze rising or falling, depending on the day; west-side residents can see the towers of New York City, 32 miles away. Never to be resolved is the friendly 75-year-old dispute over which of the two sides is superior—the west has the prevailing summer breeze but also the harsh afternoon sun; the east has a better water view but faces winter storms.

The Point owes its topography to the ancient glaciers of the Pleistocene period: retreating quickly, they left the Connecticut waterfront with spits and inlets instead of the even, sandy beaches of Long Island's south shore. The Point's connection to the mainland is a narrow, hilly, six-hundred-foot-wide finger of land. Because land passage was difficult and the shallow water discouraged anchorage, the Point was little used up through the Civil War era. But by the 1880s, the growth of New York City created a demand for suburban second houses, and Long Neck Point's isolation came to be its main advantage. The New York & New Haven Railroad, opened in the 1840s, put Darien just within the still desirable one-hour commuting range; New York's elite business and professional



families began to summer outside the city, but still within daily range for the head of the household.

In the summer of 1884 one such household moved to Long Neck Point, that of John D. Crimmins, and by 1890 the family's summer compound was underway—a huge Victorian house, a great waterside stable, formal gardens and a conservatory, and secondary houses into which were sprinkled various relations and Crimmins's fourteen children. Within a few years, Crimmins's purchases (on the east side of the Point) were matched by those of the other three founding families: the Trowbridges of New York, who bought on the east and west sides; and the families of two prominent New York businessmen, Anson Phelps Stokes, who took the tip of the Point, and William Ziegler, who bought up the entire head.

The Trowbridges built several vaguely Tudor palaces near the Crimmins property, and the Stokeses erected a huge Georgian house after they enlarged the tip of the Point. The Zieglers laid out the working farm that survives today, reportedly the largest undeveloped shore-front property between Boston and New York. The Stokeses left early, around 1910, their house going to an elite Catholic girls' boarding school, and by the teens Long Neck Point was in its early maturity. The Crimminses, the Trowbridges, and an occasional odd family formed a lively populated center, while the Ziegler farm buffered the Point from the mainland; all three families still occupy most of their original houses on Long Neck Point.



Opposite: With fragments of old Colonial buildings, Lurelle Guild assembled the Point's most memorable houses during the thirties. *Top:* The Ziegler farm, established at the head of Long Neck Point in 1903, still isolates the rest of the Point from the mainland. *Above:* John D. Crimmins (with beard) established a family compound on Long Neck Point.

This was specifically a summer colony that closed down in the winter, and the warm months generally saw each family stay on its own turf. "There was no reason to go anywhere else," recalls a Trowbridge daughter. "Everything was here." "Everything" included tennis parties, exploring the vast family houses, sandwiches on the porch, and, always, "so many cousins." Conveniently, everything, including guests, came to the Point.

Although the Trowbridges had several houses of equal size, Crimmins family activities revolved, and still revolve, around the original house, a sprawling Queen Anne building bigger than some seaside hotels, with old photographs, dusty lacrosse sticks, fading memories, much of its original furniture, and, above all, the sense of an immense family machine, with annual swarms of cousins, in-laws, guests, servants, and "even the cousins you don't quite recognize anymore," as a member of the Crimmins family puts it. The Ewings *(Continued on page 186)*

On the east side, the houses face Long Island Sound, with its dreamy haze rising or falling, depending on the day; west-side residents can see the towers of New York, 32 miles away

(Continued from page 185) occupy the house now (Mrs. Ewing is a Crimmins), and preside over the annual Fourth of July reunion and picnic on her huge waterside lawn. There are the usual games appurtenant to a large family—baseball, tug of war, egg tossing—and then everyone puts on costumes made of any available item—mop heads, inner tubes, old raincoats, vintage leather football helmets—and parades around the grounds. The parade carries a haunting, tribal quality just underneath its brightly colored surface, as if the Crimminses are creating one more sepia photograph to hang in an upstairs hallway, a reaffirmation of the clan's survival. That night, a great stack of driftwood is lit for a bonfire on the beach; it often gets reported as a burning ship, and still smolders the next morning.

In their heyday, these two families clearly dominated the Point, simply by their numbers. The Crimminses added, through marriage, the Parsonses, Childses, Daleys, Ewings, Challinors, and Rawles, and the Trowbridges grew into the Bells, Dickinsons, Drapers, Ingersolls, and Ellimans. There was even an intermarriage between a Crimmins and a Trowbridge, and their son still lives on the Point.

The original houses all face the water, not the road, and it is the water that is the constant in Point memories. Everyone over forty remembers Jamie Trowbridge's big steam yacht cruising the Sound, while the owner, in a white linen suit and straw hat, read the newspaper on deck. Kevin Crimmins remembers the slate-topped seawall girdling the Point "from the bathhouse around to the other side. I used to roller skate on it from here all the way to Aunt Dora Rawle's place—a mile and a half. But it's been broken up by storms." Pamela Trowbridge Trimingham, recently returned to the Point, can recreate a child's evening of fifty years ago: "We used to lie on our beds on our sleeping porch on summer nights. If I saw the fog coming in I knew that the lighthouse was going to sound, and I'd just lie there, waiting for it." She reproduces the shuddering baritone of the foghorn: WWHHOOOOOOO-whoooooooo."

The hurricane of 1938 etched itself in the collective Long Neck Point memory. No houses came down, but the toll was taken in bathhouses, trees, and landscaping. Coincidentally, it was in the late thirties that Long Neck Point began to awaken from its protected Edwardian slumber. The first real change was a quick sprinkling of tiny rental houses by Lurelle Guild, one of the great vernacular designers of our period, who assembled seven-tenths-scale versions of Monticello and other Classical buildings. Although they were right by the road, no one seemed to notice at first: "He must have been ten or twelve years building the first, and it just sat there," a neighbor remembers. "We all said, well, it's just another toy. Then he put up another, and suddenly there were all these little houses." The automobile and growing suburbanization meant that Long Neck Point had lost its picturesque isolation. After World War II, big second houses suddenly became too expensive, and the Point just as suddenly changed to a year-round community. More new houses went up, either within the family compounds for family use or at their edges as vacant land became an increasingly expensive luxury.

The original settlers at the turn of the century had never imagined any need for property controls, their sense of security reinforced by the large family groups. Modern Point residents maintained this laissez-faire attitude; even though the old Stokes mansion remained on the market for years—attracting plans for hotels, restaurants, discos, and other distinctly nonresidential uses—the residents did not band together to buy or control the property, and the mansion was finally cut in half, its grounds developed with eight houses. As one newcomer to the Point says: "It just didn't concern them too much; they didn't want to get involved in any active change. It's almost as if the people who have been here since the nineteenth century think it's still the nineteenth century."

If the era of the great houses on huge plots is ending, the Point still has the secluded quality that attracted John D. Crimmins a hundred years ago. As befits its origin as a summer place, there are fragments of earlier times strewn around like loose scrapbook pages: pink marble columns from one of the demolished Trowbridge houses turn up as garden edging; gray, car-sized pieces of slate litter the beach where the seawall has collapsed. Cobblestones from Crimmins's street-construction jobs in the nineteenth century are used and reused for driveways, and Lurelle Guild's houses have inspired builders of later houses to incorporate old doorways and even transplant entire walls from old buildings into their newer structures. The road is still empty enough for Point dogs to trot up and down from driveway to driveway, concerned only with their own obscure canine errands. To live on Long Neck Point today is to be, above all, unconcerned, as if one of the great families will protect you from misfortune. Gradually the big old houses are mixing in with the smaller, later ones, like the different generations at the Crimminses' Fourth of July parade. Long Neck Point keeps plowing through Long Island Sound, never leaving or arriving, but always in a sort of dreamy en route. □

(Continued from page 133) century American patrons.

Alva Smith had also been in Europe during the middle years of the nineteenth century. Her parents left Alabama after the Civil War, educated their daughters in France, and returned to the U.S. in the early 1870s, joining a postwar surge moving to New York. It was the beginning of the Gilded Age—a dizzying time in the city, with the newly rich asserting their arrival and the established elite matching each extravagant gesture with an equally lavish response. Alva was clearly in the assertive set. She was a spirited young woman; according to a contemporary, "Nothing made her happier than the knowledge that she was pitting herself as a pioneer."

Alva married one of the newly rich, William K. Vanderbilt, in 1874, and within two years the couple asked Richard Morris Hunt to design a house for them on Long Island. By their third year of marriage they were active members of New York society and needed a proper city residence. They turned to Hunt again—but with grander aspirations this time. Alva had noticed that many of New York's elite families had inherited city quarters that were unremarkable architecturally, and she recognized an opportunity to use the Vanderbilts' new wealth to advantage. She asked Hunt to build in any style, as long as it was medieval and as long as it was opulent. He obliged with a sumptuous château, and Alva's social instincts proved correct. The year after the completion of 660 Fifth Avenue Mr. and Mrs. *(Continued on page 188)*

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CHINESE FLING



Plaster Foo Dogs decorate the tiled eaves of the teahouse—some are originals, others carefully made from recently cast molds.

(Continued from page 187) Vanderbilt received their first invitation to the prestigious Patriarch's Ball. They celebrated with a spectacular costume party, and from that point on William and Alva had arrived.

Architecture was one of their great passions, and each new building they commissioned proved a dazzling display of Mr. Vanderbilt's wealth and Mrs. Vanderbilt's keen social sense. Five years after Fifth Avenue they decided to build a third Hunt house. Ostensibly a present for Alva's 39th birthday, Marble House put the Vanderbilt mark on Newport. Before then, local summer houses were made of wood, and many were built in the massive style of Henry Hobson Richardson. Marble House glistened in comparison, as did William and Alva—or so it seemed. In 1885 the New York *World* marveled that she had taken William "by the hand and led the way for all the Vanderbilts into the gay world of society, Fifth Avenue, terrapin, Newport, dry champagne, servants in livery . . . and all the other charms of fashionable existence."

Two years after opening Marble House, Mr. and Mrs. Vanderbilt set off on an annual sailing trip, but this one ended rather abruptly in Calcutta as they left their guests and returned to Newport amid rumors of separation. William's European education had apparently endowed him with "Continental" ideas about marriage; Alva's had not. She disapproved of his philandering and was granted a divorce on the ground of adultery.

Alva had always been controversial, and this turn of events could only have added to the ranks of the disapproving. Divorce had been "solely the prerogative of actresses," in Alva's words, but years later she would boast, "I always do everything first. I blaze the trail for the rest to walk in. I was the first girl of my set to marry a Vanderbilt . . . and I was one of the first women in America to get a divorce from an influential man. I had dared to criticize openly an influential man's behavior."

Within a year Alva married Oliver H.P. Belmont, a Newport neighbor who had accompanied the Vanderbilts on several sailing trips, and she also orchestrated the marriage of her daughter Consuelo to the Duke of Marlborough. After a spectacular engagement party Marble House was closed: Mr. Belmont apparently preferred to have his wife entertain at Belcourt, his own Richard Morris Hunt house.

Alva carried on as a capable and inspired hostess—a task she took quite seriously, later identifying it as one of the most taxing jobs of a woman in her position. The problem, she explained, lay in constantly having to stage events that were new and utterly spellbinding. It was a challenge that she clearly relished. *(Continued on page 190)*

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Oil-on-ivory miniature of Mrs. Oliver H.P. Belmont, painted in 1896.

(Continued from page 188) When Mr. Belmont died in 1908, Alva moved back into Marble House and channeled her considerable energy and wealth in a new direction: the women's suffrage movement. She was as effective as always, outspoken, and occasionally unscrupulous. Accused of supporting groups with conflicting points of view, Mrs. Belmont replied, "I plead guilty to so strong a desire for the political emancipation of women that I am not at all particular as to how it will be granted." When Consuelo's unhappy marriage ended in divorce, Alva confessed that she had been less than liberal with her daughter's freedom. She had ordered Consuelo to marry the Duke, insisting that she had no right to choose her own husband. But time tempered Mrs. Belmont's ideas; eventually she admitted that "women gain far more than they lose by an attitude of independence."

For a while Mrs. Belmont's passion for building seemed to lapse. She had, after all, owned four Richard Morris Hunt houses—French, Gothic, Renaissance, and Georgian; she hardly needed another. But she was an impetuous collector and in 1912 decided to build a Chinoiserie teahouse. Alva turned to Hunt's two sons, who were carrying on their father's practice. With the academic and stylistic integrity that had become the Hunt hallmark, Richard and Joseph set off to document temples and palaces in China before beginning their design for Mrs. Belmont.

Why Alva chose the Chinese style is something of a mystery. Chinoiserie was locally familiar because Newport had been a major port for the China trade. Outside of Newport, several buildings may have captured her imagination. The Royal Gardens at Kew had an elaborate Oriental pagoda and pavilion designed by Sir William Chambers, who had also published a book on Chinoiserie buildings and their use in landscape gardens. More recently, Mrs. Belmont's generation had admired Oriental pavilions at the Philadelphia Centennial and at the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893. Richard Morris Hunt had been involved in planning the latter, and the fair itself could hardly have escaped Mrs. Belmont's attention.

Whatever the source of Alva's inspiration, her teahouse was exotic and admired, and the party that marked its completion was every bit as spellbinding as she wanted it to be. Newport reveled in Chinoiserie that summer; emporiums imported and exhibited Chinese costumes; people looked at the ancient screens, carvings, banners, and embroideries in Newport drawing rooms in a new light.

For three seasons Mrs. Belmont gave parties and teas and held suffragist rallies in her teahouse. But with the advent of the war she closed Marble House and devoted herself to women's rights, sponsoring lectures, leading marches, and writing articles; Mrs. Belmont also wrote a libretto for a suffragist opera.

Throughout the last years of her life, Mrs. Belmont retained her active interest in women's rights and in architecture. From a medieval château in France she reflected upon her experiences and those of twentieth-century women in general: "We know we can manage the house. We can reconstruct it. We can put on a left and a right wing. We can add a sun porch and let in the light. We could even tear the house down if we liked—and I think men know that, too." And lest anyone in her audience doubt her conviction she added, "Today is no time to be bored. This is the time for women to want what they want and get it It is a great age in which to live." □

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(Continued from page 89) cupboard retaining its original salmon paint—the only coat of paint it had ever had! Acceptance was not so easy, however, when he began discovering the unusual, and at that time very strange, dado and wall decoration. Many soul-searching sessions took place before the decision was made to remain true to the mandate and to restore the decorations as they were in 1777. Fortunately, enough decoration was found still intact to allow several patches to be preserved—proof to the most doubting visitor that those diamonds, spots, and squiggles really were on the walls in the eighteenth century.

The mansion, built in 1758, follows (although not precisely) the four-room-and-central-hall (passageway) Georgian floor plan so much in style in Philadelphia throughout the middle years of the eighteenth century. Not so conventional, however, is the division of the decorative features of the house into a formal, Georgian front half and a rural, Germanic rear. Visitors entering the house by the front door were (and still are) treated to a view of an elaborately carved summer (principal) beam housing supported by reeded pilasters, impressive crown molding, and plastered ceilings. Visitors entering by the back door, on the other hand, saw (and still see) a perfectly plain summer beam housing and pilasters, and exposed, beaded ceiling beams. The rooms to either side of the center hall echo the same treatment. The crown molding of the front hall continues into the living room where it is joined by imposing raised paneling. The dining room (also in the front half) contains a high-style, built-in, stepped-top corner cupboard. The rooms to the rear repeat the exposed beams of the rear hall. The same situation pertains on the second floor with elaborate rooms to the front of the house and unadorned ones to the rear. Peter seems to have felt that those who entered his house from the front were more worthy than those who entered from the rear.

The room that family tradition says was Washington's is on the second floor, front right. It is unusual in that the entire fireplace wall, with the exception of the space needed for the fireplace itself, is devoted to deep, built-in closets that run floor-to-ceiling over a tier of drawers. Built-in closets of any kind are rarely encountered in Pennsylvania stone farmhouses.



Above: The deep fireplace in the winter kitchen with iron utensils from the region on the hearth. *Below:* Johnny-jump-ups.



The historic importance of the house is at least equal to its decorative interest. While headquartered there, Washington laid final plans for the Battle of Germantown, which resulted in an "almost win." It was at the farmstead, subsequent to the battle, that Washington received news of Burgoyne's defeat by General Gates at Saratoga—the turning point of the American Revolution. To honor the event, a *feu de joie* was fired by Washington's troops, but so close to Peter's house that several windows were shattered—a repair bill that was later satisfied by Congress.

The architectural importance of the house lies in its clear blending of the two predominant cultures of Eastern Pennsylvania. Although Peter built a house that at first glance seems pure Georgian, his German background is revealed by the tile roofs of the bake oven and pig stable, and by the house blessing carved in archaic German into a stone in the summer kitchen wall. Peter achieved an interior German ambience by rotating his winter kitchen fireplace ninety degrees from the accepted English norm. Instead of placing it on the gable wall, he used it to separate the kitchen from the dining room—and was thus able to introduce a five-plate Germanic jamb stove into the latter. Displaying even more architectural ingenuity, he also managed to mount another such stove into the back wall of the living room's corner fireplace, thereby providing heat to the master bedroom. Both of these stoves had disappeared long before the restoration project began, but architectural evidence in the form of additional bracing under the floor indicated their earlier existence and correct positions. Several lucky finds during the course of restoration produced patterns for all five plates, and with the help of the Country Iron Foundry of Paoli, Pennsylvania, and the Mercer Museum of Doylestown, Pennsylvania, reproductions of the original stoves were cast and mounted into their eighteenth-century positions.

For reasons yet unknown, Peter Wentz sold his farmstead in 1784 at age 65 and moved to a smaller place two miles away. His inventory at his death in 1793 lists the furnishings of the smaller house. In developing a furnishings plan for the farmstead, the assumption was made that just about everything listed in the inventory would have been in the mansion, and collecting has been based on that document. Inventories, however, can be meager fare. Essential as it is to

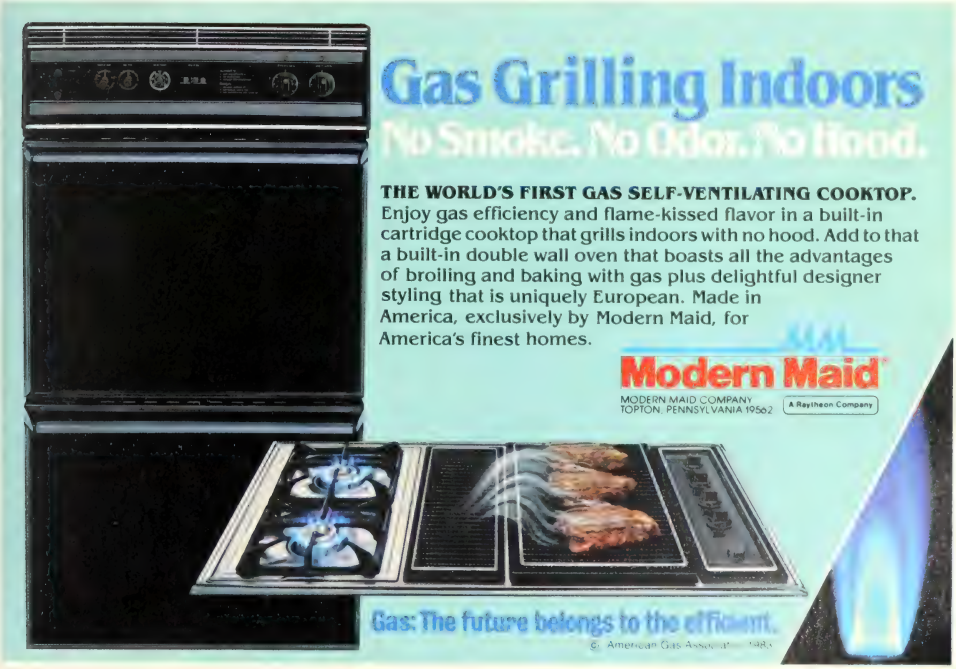
know that Peter owned items such as the ones listed as cheairs *(sic)*, a couch, or a cloths press *(sic)*, it is not enough. Additional assumptions must be made regarding the *kind* of cheairs, couch, and cloths press. The key assumptions in this case were that Peter, a wealthy man, was familiar with Philadelphia styles, and that while he was somewhat ostentatious, he was also frugal. The architectural details of the house seem to prove the former assumption and the differences in decoration between the front and back support the latter. Based on these two assumptions, the collection includes formal Delaware Valley furnishings in the front of the house and less sophisticated local pieces in the back rooms.

Even though Peter was not to inherit the farmstead until 1749, he anticipated his inheritance by starting to improve it in 1744. One of the first buildings he erected was a stone barn that was subsequently—around the middle of the nineteenth century—completely dismantled and replaced by a larger, more modern barn. The configuration of the 1744 barn was developed from its foundation, its original stall wall, which had been incorporated into the expanded barn, and a great deal of original timbering, which had also been used in the construction of the new barn. In order to return the barn to its original configuration, however, it was necessary to tear down the nineteenth-century barn and completely reconstruct the 1744 one. This is what was done, and the barn—standing as it did in the eighteenth century—is now fully operational, stocked with farm animals of the old breeds—the kinds that *could* have been here when Washington was.

Archaeological investigation proved the location of three of the four original kichen-garden corner posts, so the garden was re-created on its proper site just outside of the breezeway door. It is laid out in the old German manner, with four raised beds for seasonal flowers and vegetables, surrounded by a narrow band of herbs and perennials. It is enclosed by a four-foot-high, rough-hewn pale fence. The garden was researched and installed by the Norristown Garden Club and is maintained by farmstead staff, both paid and volunteer. The backbone of the farmstead's operation is its volunteer staff of approximately seventy docents, guides, and craftspeople, most of whom are costumed. Crafts demonstrations are provided on a weekly basis, seminars on various eighteenth-century subjects are offered periodically, and a colonial crafts summer camp for children has been held. □

Produced by Babs Simpson

The farmstead, open 10-4, Tuesday through Saturday, 1-4 Sunday, is close to the intersection of Pennsylvania routes 73 and 363. No admission charge, but donations are "gleefully accepted." For information, contact The Peter Wentz Farmstead, P.O. Box 240, Worcester, Pa. 19490.



JOURNAL

RUSSEL WRIGHT'S AMERICAN CLASSICS

Russel Wright: American Designer; *Renwick Gallery, Washington, D.C.; Nov. 4–Apr. 1, 1984*

Creating beautifully designed mass-produced objects for the common man was one of the most cherished goals of the early modern period. In this country it came closest to being realized in the works of Russel Wright (1904–76), the designer whose major contribution is the subject of a well-deserved retrospective. Simplicity, economy, and practicality were his watchwords, but he eschewed the machinelike look of mainstream modernism in favor of the rounded, biomorphic forms of Surrealism. His furniture and dinnerware (especially his "American Modern" ceramics, made from 1939 to 1959 by Steubenville Pottery) were avidly welcomed by design-conscious Americans in a society overwhelmed by decorative kitsch. *Martin Filler*



Wright's "American Modern" china.



Louise Dahl-Wolfe, *Coco Chanel,* Rue Cambon, Paris, 1954

THE STYLISH ART OF LOUISE DAHL-WOLFE

Louise Dahl-Wolfe: *Grey Art Gallery, New York, Sept. 27–Oct. 15; Staley-Wise Gallery, New York, Sept. 29–Nov. 10*

Stylish is the word for Louise Dahl-Wolfe's photography from the thirties through the fifties, which strikes us with its extraordinary lucidity. Her imagery is marked by an effortless, modern, even Modernist elegance, an almost abstract formal perfection. This formal felicity is created by the beautifully judged relationships existing among the major elements of her photographs: the model, a vase of flowers, a column in the background. Harmony is sometimes secured by an understated, never banal, re-echoing of the dominant motif: the legs of the model may be deliciously reiterated by the chubby marble limbs of a fountain sculpture in the background, for example. But then, there is always something more, a telling detail that is like Dahl-Wolfe's signature and pulls the whole image together: a perfectly placed drapery fold, an unusual angle of vision, an intriguing old map on the back wall.

Striking contrasts of light and dark mark the fashion photographs featured at Staley-Wise. One of the best of these pictures paradoxically depicts the model nude rather than fashionably clothed, although it is clear that this modishly slender woman, viewed from the back, is an American fashion model and that the year is 1948—as clear as if she were wearing an outfit from the period—a Claire McCardell, for instance. The racy curves and angles of the model's back, burnished by brilliant sunlight to high relief against a vast desert background, create an unforgettable image of loveliness which is both time-bound and timeless: a classic that is nevertheless marked with a certain period chic in the form of streamlined contours and painted fingernails. Beneath the glittering smoothness of the naked back a Turkish towel has been draped with a linear astuteness that Ingres might well have envied.

Although she is less well-known as a portraitist, Dahl-Wolfe's work in this genre, mainly images of fashion world personae, is both striking and humanly perceptive. In one such portrait, Coco Chanel poses very deliberately on a cast-iron deer in her Paris flat on the Rue Cambon, vital as



Nude on Desert, 1948

ever in 1954, wearing a trademark jersey suit, her up-to-date chic and general good taste beautifully emphasized by the pure curves of the Greek marble torso on the mantlepiece next to her. Here, the fashionable and the classical confront each other with confidence.

Linda Nochlin

Events of exceptional interest in the arts, design, entertainment, and living

ENGLISH FACTS AND FRENCH FANTASIES

Great Drawings from the Collection of the Royal Institute of British Architects. New Orleans Museum of Art, Sept. 11–Nov. 6. Museum of Art, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, Dec. 3–Jan. 29.

Paris-Rome-Athens: Travels in Greece by French Architects in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, through Sept. 4. IBM Gallery of Science and Art, New York, Feb. 9–Mar. 24, 1984.



Charles Voysey, Grayfriars, Surrey, England, 1897

Can architectural drawings reveal a nation's attitude toward the art? Quite possibly, if two current shows are any indication. A selection of 82 works from over 200,000 in the RIBA archives—one of the most splendid architecture exhibitions in recent memory—is rich with great treasures: ravishing sketches and renderings by Inigo Jones, Sir Christopher Wren, Sir John Soane, and Sir Edwin Lutyens are thoroughly pragmatic and unflinchingly forthright.

Quite different are the 155 travel drawings by students of the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, curated by Barbara Rose. Though the ideal was to study the great examples of classical antiquity, the spectacular drawings that resulted often showed a great deal of romantic fantasy as well. *M.F*



Albert Tournaire, *Restoration of Delphi,* watercolor and ink, 1894

NEW FOCUS ON A UNIVERSAL THEME

Excerpts from conversations with artist Betty Hahn, who now lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and teaches at the University of New Mexico:

"Flowers are a universal theme and I decided to make photographs of them because they are a classic subject, like landscape or the nude. As such, flowers are neutral territory, they allow themselves to be shaped by whatever idea the artist brings to them.

"For me, the idea was to



Botanical Layout: Anemone, 1980

combine photography and drawing. I started my career in painting, so it seemed a natural way to work. In most of my *Botanical Layout*—except the peonies—there are fine, black ink lines around the flowers and small notations, letters, written in as well. The drawing is intended to play off of the precision, the total, incredible accuracy of the photographs, while connecting the pictures to early botanical plates, a tradition that started, I

Continued on page 196

think, in the seventeenth century.

"The scale of the camera made the flowers larger than life—a nice play on the fact that botanical plates make the flowers smaller than they actually are. And also the camera makes the flowers look so real. Whatever it is, I can't put my finger on it, but the *Botanical Layouts* have something a little too anatomical about them. They're like an autopsy—they have that edge that makes them more than just elegant pictures of flowers."

Mary Ann Tighe



CALIFORNIA'S NEW WAVE IS STILL ADVANCING

California Counterpoint: New West Coast Architecture. *San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Nov. 3–Jan. 15*

Far outstripping their East Coast contemporaries in originality, inventiveness, and dash, the innovative architects of California today—Andrew Batey and Mark Mack; Frederick Fisher; Frank Gehry (*above*: his Spiller house in Venice); Coy Howard; Thom Mayne and Michael Rotondi of Morphosis; Stanley Saitowitz; and Craig Hodgetts and Robert Mangurian of Studio Works—present their latest work in a show confirming their importance. *M.F.*



HER LAST CLOSE-UP

When Gloria Swanson died last April, an era of Hollywood glamour passed with her. Every inch a star, she lived her role to the hilt offstage as well as on. Now her worldly goods are being auctioned at New York's William Doyle Galleries in a series of five sales that peaks with an all-day event on September 22 at which her clothing, accessories, and memorabilia will go under the hammer. Among the highlights: originals by the legendary couturière Valentina, an inscribed silver cigarette box from the cast of her triumphant 1950 film *Sunset Boulevard,* postcard drawings from John Lennon and Yoko Ono, and her sizeable collection of faux leopard, *left,* a taste she retained from her heyday in the twenties. *M.F.*

THE STARS IN TV'S FALL CONSTELLATION

Even with Bette Davis, *Hotel* (ABC) checks into *The Love Boat* genre, with predictable plots and characters. *The Yellow Rose* (NBC), a late-night soap set on a Texas ranch, is a gathering of faces not seen for a while—Cybill Shepard, David Soul, Edward Albert, and Chuck Connors. *Whiz Kids* (CBS) is a clever *WarGames*-like mystery series, with teenagers tapping their computer into systems where it doesn't belong. *Gabrielle Winkel*



Bette Davis as Laura Trent in ABC's *Hotel*



DOUBLE TROUBLE FROM LEONARD BERNSTEIN

Leonard Bernstein turned 65 this summer, a milestone for himself—and for all of us, because it means that his name has been in our households for (can it be?) forty years. *Forty years* (you look to your calendar, I'll look to mine) since that astonishing nationwide broadcast when the New York Philharmonic's 25-year-old American-born-and-trained assistant conductor took over the concert from the ailing Bruno Walter and led it to glory. There were no 25-year-old conductors in 1943, much less conductors born and trained American. The phenomenal public success of the young Bernstein made all that possible. He was our first authentic prodigy: pianist and conductor of immense flair, composer in almost any respectable idiom of his time, and in some less respectable. In the twelve months around that

November 1943 broadcast, Bernstein had found time to compose a symphony, *Jeremiah,* a set of songs, the ballet *Fancy Free* and its expansion into the Broadway musical *On the Town*

By any measurement you can devise, Leonard Bernstein has made good on the glowing promise of those prodigious early years. He has been for the growth of musical awareness in this country a supremely eloquent advocate: at once both child and master of the media. As a conductor he has shared his own spotlight with a great deal of music that people might have ignored but for him: music of Gustav Mahler and Carl Nielsen of the recent past, a vast panorama of music of our own time. And whatever niche his music may earn in the creative pantheon, it stands at least as a triumphant trumpeting of the joys of eclecticism. When Leonard Bernstein chose *The Infinite Variety of Music* as the title for one of his books, he might just as easily have used it himself as a composer.

Truth to tell, the last few years have witnessed some falling-off in that one corner of Bernstein's infinite variety. From 1971's *Mass,* the inaugural work for the Kennedy Center, through 1976's *1600 Pennsylvania Avenue,* the Bicentennial musical for Broadway; from the 1977 *Songfest,* the symphonic anthology of American poetry for singers and orchestra, to *A Quiet Place,* the brand-new opera that fell somewhat flat at the Houston Opera last summer, there hasn't been much in Bernstein's new music to rekindle memories of that brash, inventive, ingratiating young genius who once had stormed the twin peaks of theater and concert hall with equal success.

Trouble in Tahiti is one of the great pieces from those vintage years, a cheeky little almost-opera, running a mere forty minutes, about a suburban marriage gone sour, its featherweight episodes cutely framed by a trio of jazzy choristers, its dissection of the clichés of upper-middle-class life sharp and exhilarating. The piece was introduced at Brandeis University in 1952, and quickly became a popular item for small opera troupes.

The new opera has been conceived as a kind of sequel to the earlier score—the time, thirty years later, the wife dead in a car crash, the two children both caught up in a strange bisexual triangle, the father alienated. In nearly three times the length of *Tahiti,* father and family trudge slowly but inexorably toward some manner of reconciliation, arrived at in Stephen Wadsworth's libretto by devices familiar to any watcher of daytime TV.

In a sense, Bernstein's music for *A Quiet Place* mirrors the action as keenly as had the score for the earlier opera. The problem, however, is that psychological confusions don't sing as well on the stage as do satires about suburbia. There are cross references between *Trouble in Tahiti* and *A Quiet Place,* so the new work cannot very well stand alone, yet the Bernstein of 1983 is put to shame over and again by the arrogant vitality of the 1952 predecessor.

And so *A Quiet Place* must join the depressing list of compositional failures racked up by Leonard Bernstein over the past dozen-or-so years. Does it matter? Of course not, if only because the history of music is full of fallow periods among great composers. In Bernstein's case, it doesn't matter when set against the continuing vitality of his overall services to music: the TV appearances, the recordings, the ongoing public works. It doesn't matter for this overwhelming reason: even among the recent failures, there aren't two works by Bernstein in any way alike. Whatever the result, he's still trying out one of everything, the way he did back in 1943 and in all the years in between. Our great eclectic is still in orbit. Bon voyage, Lenny! *Alan Rich*

AN IRON-CLAD CONTRACT

In *The Draughtsman's Contract,* two post-Restoration fops in large, twin-peaked wigs and rouge (they look like overexcited sheep) put their heads together at a candlelit dinner party, *(Continued on page 198)*



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(Continued from page 197)
pronounce some heartlessly witty gossip about their neighbors, and the movie takes off. *The Draughtsman's Contract,* directed by the British avant-gardist Peter Greenaway (this is his first theatrical feature), is a calculatedly nasty high-style entertainment, mixing murder, sex, stunning clothes, and some of the toniest literary dialogue to be heard in years. Set in Wiltshire in 1694 (though shot in Kent), the movie might be characterized as an Agatha Christie murder story done in Restoration-comedy style.

At that same party, the obnoxious Mr. Herbert, owner of the house, informs his wife that he plans to be away for two weeks and requests her not to drink too much of his claret. Eager to placate her vile husband, Mrs. Herbert (Janet Suzman) approaches the young painter and draughtsman, Mr. Neville (Anthony Higgins), with the proposal that he make a series of twelve drawings of their estate. She plans to make the drawings a gift to Mr. Herbert—or so she says. Neville, a brazenly handsome young man who talks to women with a commanding sneer, agrees to do the drawings under one condition—that Mrs. Herbert make herself available to his pleasure.

A contract is drawn up and signed, and Neville sets to work, moving about the grounds with a large metal grid that he uses to compose and frame his drawings. When he's not working, he makes free with Mrs. Herbert, who submits to him with evident dismay. We sense pretty soon that some deeper stratagem has been set here, that the impudent and abrasive draughtsman is not as clever as he seems—that he might be framing himself. A very literal-minded man, he draws exactly what appears to him when he holds up the frame, including an odd sprinkling of shirts, sheets, boots, and so on. To his astonishment, Mrs. Herbert's daughter, the beautiful Mrs. Talmann (Ann Louise Lambert), who is married to a surly, impotent Dutchman, informs him that he has drawn the clues to the probable murder of her father. Telling him that he is in danger, she blackmails him into sleeping with her as well.

The characters stand on the awn in their extraordinary clothes black bloomers for the men, nagnificent gowns and huge onnets rising up like Montezuma's headdress for the women) and speak in long, erfectly composed sentences. Sitting outside at a long table in the summer evening, Mrs. Herbert, Neville, the Talmanns, and a gibbering crew of rejected suitors and elegant hangers-on bandy insults back and forth, and pronounce, in an informal way, on such matters as English painting and gardening and the relations of Protestants to Catholics. This is one of the rare movies that uses erudition and wit as a plot device; each of the sallies and mots is a strand in the tangled web that catches Neville.



Janet Suzman, *center*, as Mrs. Herbert

Like so many avant-gardists, Greenaway is profoundly suspicious of the reassuring conventions of plot. And yet in this movie he cannot make do without a plot (in both senses). So he works an elaborate tease, establishing all the groundwork of an Agatha Christie whodunit and then frustrating our desire to fully understand what happened. The events in this movie are finally only half-comprehensible; the movie's seemingly formal and polished surface gives way on closer examination to rather murky depths. Yet it is infinitely suggestive; it's a naughty, slightly preposterous movie that yields a great deal of pleasure. One can argue the meaning of this movie for hours. The wicked Greenaway has invaded our own domestic peace with his lush landscapes, sensual boudoir scenes, and insinuating jokes. □

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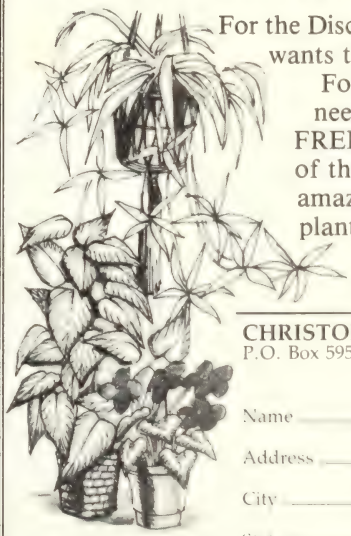
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For *The Moon in the Gutter,* McConnico designed labels and license plates that look real but aren't. Although the audience will never catch their subtleties, he spent weeks inserting tiny jokes on these labels

(Continued from page 128) lit with yellow lights to give them an unforgettable underglow. And the diva occupies a hotel suite so luxurious that when Beineix was finished with it, the hotel manager was sad to see McConnico's improvements taken away.

But the most dramatic design triumph of *Diva* is to be found in the abandoned tobacco factory that McConnico chose for the apartment of the chain-smoking millionaire who solves the film's mystery—a completely black loft with only a white porcelain tub for furniture. "Actually, only the lacquered floor and the door moldings are really black," McConnico says. "The walls are charcoal gray so they'll absorb the light. The windows, too, are not quite what they seem. When we ran out of money, I used crushed blue candy wrappers in the corners to give the idea of blue crystallized cobwebs."

If *Diva* is a study in blue, with blue wave-sculptures, blue-gray gowns for the singer, and blue cigarette packages, *The Moon in the Gutter* is a study in green. "Much of the movie takes place at night," McConnico explains, "and a green night is much more oppressive than a blue one." The choice of a dominant color is only the beginning of McConnico's influence of this film. Beineix wanted his seaport city to be at once familiar and strange, so McConnico designed "Chinese houses, Moroccan fire escapes, and French alleys to give people a déjà vu feeling, but of no particular place." And then McConnico painted a green stripe around the city: a waterline that, like the volcano in the distance and the sign that advises TRY ANOTHER WORLD, constantly reminds these characters of nature's potential for disorder.

But even these signals were not fantastic enough for Beineix and McConnico, so McConnico designed product labels and license plates that look real but aren't. Although the audience will never catch their subtleties, McConnico spent weeks inserting tiny practical jokes on these labels. A plaque announces in small print that it's "the only wine to stop an elephant cold." Lush's Scotch proclaims itself "the children's drink . . . the only way a housewife can be happy." In an oddball tribute to his home town, Stazz Beer claims to be "the only beer made in Memphis." And as a kudo to cinematographer Philippe Rousselot, the name on the vodka bottle means Rousselot in Russian.



Piquet was meant to look like the label for a *vin ordinaire.* The Stromboli ad appears in the film on a billboard opposite the home of the protagonist.



McConnico did not get so involved in these jokes that he ignored his other duties. In the bedrooms, for example, he created salmon-colored wallpaper with scarlet and burgundy leaves and omitted the all-but-obligatory birds so Beineix could superimpose real birds flying off the walls. And when Beineix was about to leave the studio and go two hundred miles to find a suitable church for a wedding scene, McConnico whipped up a one-of-a-kind cathedral—set on a cliff, overlooking the sea.

And then, after being away from home for more than six months, an exhausted Hilton McConnico returned to his Paris apartment. Here, not surprisingly, there is not much to keep McConnico from dreaming anew; except for two floor lights from a film set and some personal photographs, the only art that can be seen are mounted and framed leaves from his travels, which he keeps in the bathroom, and the splendid series of portraits of his cats. And here, not surprisingly, the walls are crisp, glazed—and white. □

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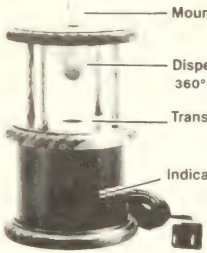
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NOT BUILT IN A DAY

(Continued from page 118) the valuable collaboration of the local workmen and the foreman, Vincenzo Jacopini; he was also in love with the old pile of stones and presented a new discovery as a gift to the architect and the owner every time they inspected the work. A group of restorers spent almost an entire year in the castle, weathering a difficult winter, to patiently attend the healthy rebirth of the antique frescoes. Architect Maurizio Cagnoni also collaborated, especially in the construction of the factory at the foot of the castle. As one can imagine, it was difficult not to break into the castle walls to install the electricity, but Piero Castiglioni, in charge of the lighting, succeeded by placing cables in the attic.

Sharing the opinion that any sign of luxury is out of place in a country castle, Piero Pinto and Laura Biagiotti considered only simple materials, even insisting on a certain "impoverished" finish. Pinto chose materials long used in the region: recycled brick and roof tiles, travertine, terra cotta, and on the walls, the so-called *stucco Romano,* or *pozzolana* (marble powder, gesso, cement, and clay bound with a method discovered at the time of Pompeii). White ceramic tiles of a particular transparency form a decorative pavement that has become one of the trademarks of Pinto's work. At Marco Simone, this tile has a special grace, for it softens the sternness of the castle. Her followers know that white is the preferred noncolor of Laura Biagiotti.

A desire for unpretentiousness also played a part in the preservation of the work of diverse periods and helped guard against "doing" the castle "in style." Pinto jokes, "Imagine falling into a fake antique mode in a real antique building." The furniture, too, was chosen eclectically, so that styles would be combined as naturally as in an old family house where each generation leaves its mark. Thus, fronting important French sofas of the nineteenth century is furniture made today; a seventeenth-century altar is seen near some "Paolo Uccello" chairs put into production at Simon International in 1981, both under a delicious eighteenth-century Venetian chandelier. Everything comes together as intended, with an effect of casualness, of elegant offhandedness, and above all, of freedom from rules.

Now the castle of Marco Simone is a house where it is pleasant to live and work—the happy ending to this love story about Laura Biagiotti and Piero Pinto and their many collaborators. For Laura there is the satisfaction of having contributed to the restoration and salvation of a tangible testimony to art and history, and by making Marco Simone alive again, she can sink her roots in a remote past whose solid foundations should have an equally durable future. To someone who works in the ephemeral world of fashion, all this has special meaning. □



The loggia, whose frescoes are thought to have been inspired by Vatican Rooms, was built in the fifteenth century, subsequently closed, and reopened by Pinto.



Mario Botta's "Seconda" chair

Continued from page 146) the fluidity of movement through the house. The frame of all the glass details, as well as the supporting frame of the innovatively designed stair, is in black iron. The wood of the steps on the stair provides a continuity of surface and feeling among the various levels of the house.

Botta does not always have a say in how a house is furnished. He may offer an opinion on various objects, and perhaps on the arrangement of furniture. He will select the fixed lighting, as he did for Casa Rotonda, but even when afforded the opportunity to make all the decisions on furnishings, he doesn't always find objects that blend well with his architecture. This predicament, familiar to architects and occupants alike, has inspired Botta to design a new set of chairs for Alias, distributed by ICF, as well as a table, to be inaugurated soon.

Though Botta has designed several stunning public buildings—the State Bank in Fribourg, Switzerland, the Theater and Cultural Center in Chambery, France—he still considers his houses the most important part of his ongoing architectural research. La Casa Rotonda, especially, challenges the usual connotation of "house," which says a square plan; by breaking again and again the rules that go with the word house, Botta is rediscovering the etymology of "architecture," which, in a way, is the summation of all the arts. Art, poetry, technique, and architecture are all words that can be traced to roots meaning "to make." Mario Botta is a maker par excellence.□

Most of the Mario Botta quotations in this article are from an interview with Botta by Livio Dimitriu in *Perspecta:* The Yale Architectural Journal, Vol. 20, 1983.

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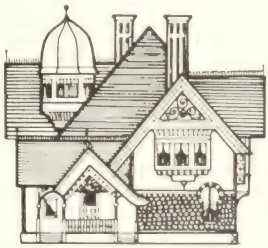


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REVOLUTION IN THE GARDEN

William Robinson's books destroyed the Victorian garden and still inspire planting today

By Deborah Nevins



Above: The twentieth-century garden in East Lambrook, England, of Margery Fish, who wrote *Cottage Garden Flowers* and who was influenced by Robinson's ideas.

When I yearn for England I dream of a small garden, the outlines of its symmetrically placed beds obscured by masses of flowering, luxuriant perennials, smaller ones growing in and among the taller ones; borders of gray-green leaves and the violet flowers of catmint *(Nepeta Mussinii)* placed in front of purple iris; here and there a stand of lilies; pale roses climbing a wall. Blooming from April to October, this garden would be inspired by the legacy of William Robinson, author of perhaps the most influential book on gardening ever printed, *The English Flower Garden*. Published in 1883, it went into sixteen ever-expanding editions over 73 years. Its effect was to break the hold of High Victorian garden design through its polemic and highly instructive text.

Robinson abhorred the mid-nineteenth-century Victorian garden full of bedding-out plants that had to be grown each season under expensive greenhouse conditions, and he hated its aesthetic formulas: tightly woven patterns of brightly colored plants laid out in beds with no consideration for the site. Before anyone else, he called for a garden dictated by the principles of nature and planted with hardy perennials that could stay in place for years and years.

Active as an author almost to his death at 97 in 1935, Robinson published, owned, and edited three major gardening magazines and wrote nineteen books. Immersed in the horticultural and scientific worlds of his time, friend of Charles Darwin, member of the Linnean Society, he traveled all over Europe and America in search of directly observed information on plants and the ways of nature. Asa Gray, one of his hosts on his American tour, was the great Harvard botanist and defender of Darwin in Boston's intellectual circles. Charles Sprague Sargent, founder of the Arnold Arboretum at Harvard, and Frederick Law Olmsted, the genius behind the design of Central Park, could also be counted as colleagues. He had a keen business sense and his publishing ventures, as well as his dealings in London real estate, made him rich enough to own paintings by Fantin-Latour and to acquire and develop the gardens at Gravetye Manor, then his house and *(Continued on page 206)*

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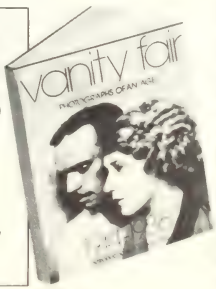
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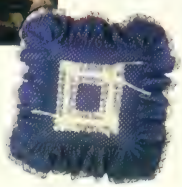
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GARDEN PLEASURES

(Continued from page 204) today one of the finest inns in Britain.

If the circle in which Robinson moved and his achievements are remarkable, they become even more so when one realizes that when he entered professional life he had no money, social status, or academic credentials in a world of rigid social hierarchies. The force of his ambition, the power of his intelligence and personality, and perhaps a drive to overcome his origins explain his great success.

When Robinson was ten his father, a land agent, left the family in Ireland and went to America with his employer's wife. Robinson's first job in a garden was carrying water to a greenhouse. He gained horticultural training at the National Botanic Garden in Dublin but his experiences in his first responsible job are legendary if apocryphal. As a foreman on an Irish estate, he is said to have quarreled with the head gardener and on one winter's night opened all the windows of the greenhouses. Seeking his fortune in London, he obtained work at the Royal Botanic Society's herbaceous garden in Regent's Park and eventually became foreman of the educational and herbaceous departments. In 1866 he gave up his post to devote himself to study and writing and became a regular correspondent for two important journals, *The Field* and *The Gardeners' Chronicle,* as well as for *The Times.* In 1871 he founded *The Garden,* a periodical that enjoyed phenomenal success.

In 1870 Robinson published *The Wild Garden,* which caused something of a sensation. It was a radical book because it was the first to castigate and challenge the High Victorian garden and the bedding-out system and to propose a kind of gardening based on hardy plants and the observation of nature—a styleless mode, it was claimed. The way of *The Wild Garden* was an escape, Robinson wrote, from the "death note of the pastry cook's garden," and it was an escape from digging and redigging flower beds every year. The very title of the book, consciously or unconsciously, was surely intended to shock staid Victorian sensibilities. Robinson called for the planting of hardy plants in woods, bogs, meadows, and on hillsides; but the book's most tangible legacy was the fashion for naturalizing spring bulbs in grass. Millions of such

)ulbs must have been planted by his al-nost religious followers.

If one were to buy only one book to each oneself about gardening, how-·ver, it should be the beautifully illus-rated *The English Flower Garden.* In his volume Robinson proves himself o be both the M.F.K. Fisher and the ulia Child of gardening. The first sec-ion is a textbook of his approach to lesign, an aesthetic treatise in which he :xpands the ideas presented in *The Wild Garden.* Included here are chap-:ers on the spring garden, the bog gar-den, the wild garden, the flower gar-den, and the autumn garden. Other sections concentrate on form, color, and fragrance alone. The second part of the book is a dictionary of plants hardy to the English climate, which in my edition runs to 579 pages. The cul-tural instructions are precise, and as logically explained as a good recipe, and hardly a botanical term intrudes to disturb the novice. The entries are among the most complete and helpful of any. They tell us not only the differ-ences between varieties but also what might be the best way to use a plant in a garden composition. Where else could one go but Robinson to find sugges-tions on how to plant nicotiana (false tobacco): "Tobaccos form noble groups of backgrounds for masses of reeds, pampas grass, bamboos, rushes. . . ." Who but Robinson could describe the sea holly in such evocative terms: "The stems are so singularly beautiful with their vivid steel-blue tints, sur-mounted with an involucre even more brilliant, that the effect of good large groups is hardly excelled by that of any plants that live in our climate."

Robinson has been credited with originating what has been called the natural, or alternatively, the Arts and Crafts garden movement in which he was joined by among others the great Gertrude Jekyll. To title it the Realist garden movement is perhaps to be more precise. Robinson evolved his ideas at the same time that such artists as Edouard Manet and Gustave Cour-bet were trying to create a truthful ac-count of the real world based on direct observation of actions, nature, objects. Progressive architects and designers also shared an interest in expressing di-rectly the form and qualities of their materials. So, too, with Robinson. Moved by *(Continued on page 208)*

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All Robinson's design principles and admonitions evolved from his own direct and wide experience observing the habits of plants in the landscape, not in the library



William Robinson among his tufted pansies, from *William Robinson 1838–1935* by Mea Allan

(Continued from page 207) his own direct observation of nature and his reading of John Ruskin—for whom nature was art's God—he likewise defined beauty as what was true to nature, true to reality and the world. All Robinson's design principles and admonitions evolved from his own direct and wide experience observing the habits of plants in the landscape, not in the laboratory or library.

Specifically, Robinson was against the adoption of any stylistic formulas and called for the confrontation of design with place: i.e., site must dictate the design scheme. Composition and planting should be planted to leave a "bold space" around them to reveal their form; vines should be let to ramble over trees and shrubs or to clothe the house with living drapery. Important also to Robinson's definition of beauty was the conjunction of form with ecological appropriateness. From this he evolved the principle, "Never let the bare ground show"—sound horticultural practice since the green cover keeps the ground moist and cool in summer. The grouping of plants according to their own ecological needs, moveover, was paramount to Robinson, and the idea generated such beautiful effects as lilies among rhododendrons, planted together because their soil needs are similar. His desire to create a Realist garden moved him to develop the principle that the designer should strive to have blooms from April to October. In effect Robinson wants us to create a kind of museum of the cycles of nature in the home landscape. Many examples are given in *The English Flower Garden*. One such by Frank Miles (Robinson had the sensible idea of soliciting first-hand accounts of success with his principles) shows the ingenuity with which this idea might be carried out. Colchicums, daffodils, and campanulas are planted together. The large leaves of the colchicums provide beautiful effect with daffodils. When the daffodils die down, the campanulas are up covering the earth. By the time the campanulas finish blooming, the colchicums send up their flowers to beautify the garden.

Robinson's search for realism in the garden led him to the appreciation of diversity and change in nature. It is beautifully put in the opening paragraph of the chapter on fragrance. He asks us to appreciate "flowers sweet at night and scentless in the day; flowers of evil odor at one hour and fragrant at another; plants sweet in breath of blossom, but deadly in leaf and sap; lilies sweet as they are fair, and lilies that must not be let into the house. . . ." In the end, perhaps Robinson's greatest contribution is his ability to make us see nature and understand its sensuosity and "reasons," as he called them. If one reads Robinson over and over, one's vision will by force be matured and developed. □

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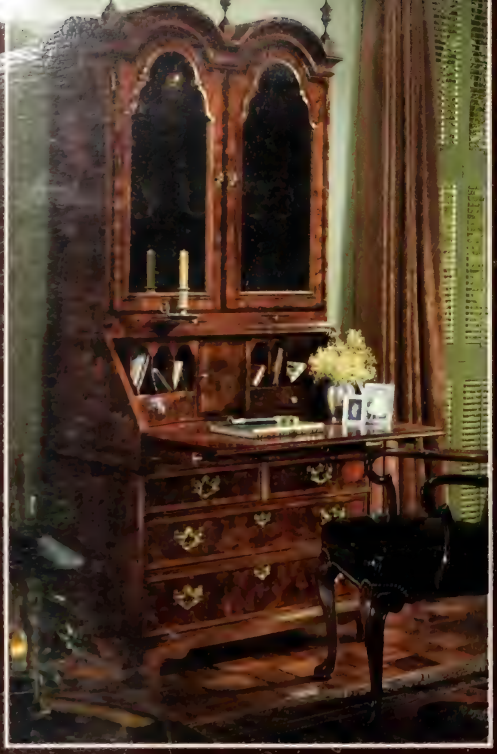
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Detail of Pinks and Clematis in a Crystal Vase, *oil on canvas painted by Edouard Manet about 1882. Story on page 144. Photograph from Services Photographiques de la Réunion des Musées Nationaux.*

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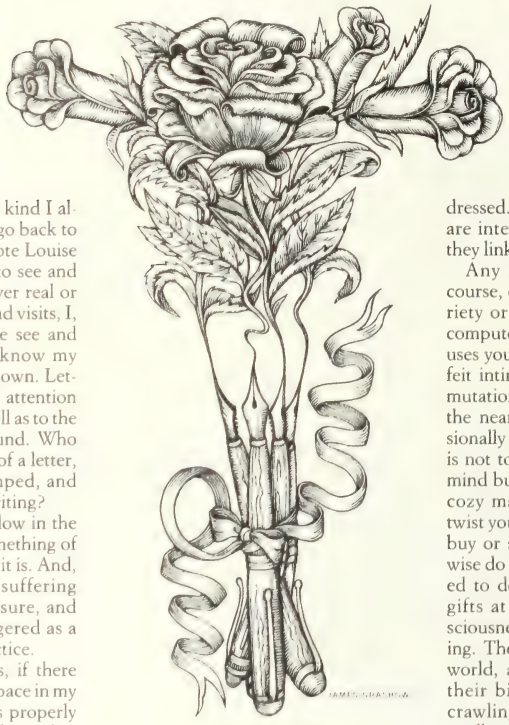
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LIFE AND LETTERS

Reflections on the passing of a most-appealing minor art

By Lee Hall



"Your letter was exactly the kind I always want when my friends go back to visit their native towns," wrote Louise Bogan to a friend. "I want to see and hear the town. . . ." Whatever real or imaginary native town a friend visits, I, too, want letters that let me see and hear the town and let me know my friend in his or her claimed town. Letters are small gifts that call attention precisely to their writer as well as to the subjects the writer pens round. Who does not rejoice at the sight of a letter, enveloped and sealed, stamped, and verified by a familiar handwriting?

Letter writing may dwell low in the hierarchy of arts, may be something of a fringe or minor art, but art it is. And, unfortunately, it is an art suffering from underuse, underexposure, and underappreciation. Endangered as a form, it is in decline as a practice.

Professional letter writers, if there be such, need not apply for space in my mailbox, for letter writing is properly an amateur's form that directly touches ordinary lives.

During the summer, in quiet times in the shade, I read three collections of letters by three writers: Louise Bogan, Flannery O'Connor, and T.H. White. These letters were all the letters of friends (amateurs) to friends and charged with human caring. In each instance, as I read letters addressed to someone else, I nonetheless saw and heard through the writer his or her many towns of space and spirit. In a letter, T.H. White cheekily commented to his once mentor and lifelong correspondent, L.J. Potts, that asking for letters from a writer is akin to asking a farmer to spade your garden.

Fortunately for me in my real garden's real shade, these writers did spade a lot of gardens for friends and associates and, moreover, they stuck around to plant and trim and help harvest, to identify flora along the paths they laid out and the fountains they built. Over the years, their letters rambled through a variety of gardens of delight, recounting the joys and agonies of daily life, sharing dreams, exposing worries and frets about life and death, musing about writing as craft and vocation, wailing over love found or lost, and touching always the consciousness of those to whom their letters were addressed. These letters did what letters are intended to do between friends: they linked sensibilities and lives.

Any letter reveals its writer, of course, except the Dear Occupant variety or, worse, the newly contrived computer-generated monstrosity that uses your name in stolen and counterfeit intimacy. I suppose these hateful mutations, pretending to business, are the nearest thing we have to professionally fabricated letters. Their work is not to reveal an individual heart or mind but to sidle up to you in an oily-cozy manner and bend your ear or twist your arm all out of shape so you'll buy or subscribe or donate or otherwise do something you had not intended to do. Letters of this mark aren't gifts at all but intrusions into consciousness and affronts to ordered living. There ought to be, in a civilized world, a way to kill them off before their birth and to keep them from crawling around nastily in a private mailbox, an infestation of discourtesy aimed with zip-code accuracy at someone who doesn't want them. Worse, however, they mock an honest, humble, occasionally exalted art form.

Good letters between good friends are the easy and generous portions of knowing and being known, of caring. Letters may properly carry requests of friend to friend and so exactly measure the ease of friendship. In this mood, Louise Bogan wrote to Edmund Wilson: "I open this note with a request that will raise every hackle on your spine with fury and distaste. . . . Could you have someone in your ménage . . . readdress and send off to me the *(Continued on page 18)*

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(Continued from page 10) brown-paper parcel left . . . I believe, stored in the bottom of the living-room cupboard?"

I like to think that Wilson smiled and obediently fetched and posted the brown-paper parcel, glad to meet a request from a friend, enjoying knowing Louise Bogan, who would, after all, leave behind some vital portion of her wardrobe.

Similarly, Potts must have inked his donnish wisdom in immediate answer to White's plea: "As usual I am writing to you when in trouble. The fact is, I have one or two thousand pounds; a distressing circumstance to which I am by no means accustomed, and I don't know what to do with the stuff. I believe one has to 'invest' it, but I don't know how to do this, or what in. . . . Will you please find time to write and tell me about money?"

Letters mostly request that we know their writers in stages, from mundane and daily to high and holy. As an example on the mundane end of the scale, Flannery O'Connor sent to Sally and Robert Fitzgerald a pickle recipe that they had requested from her and certified its value with the comment, "Regina had never made any such but got the recipe out of a very dirty old cookbook so it should be alright." To Maryat Lee O'Connor confided, "My Chinese goose has now laid five eggs but they all froze so I shall eatum."

While O'Connor wrote with detached amusement to her friends about her failing health and about learning to walk on crutches, a condition that made her "feel like a large stiff anthropoid ape who has no cause to be thinking of St. Thomas or Aristotle," she also wrote with sparkling delight about her mother and her life in Milledgeville, Georgia. She wrote to Robert Lowell, "I've been in Georgia with the buzzards for the last year and a half on acct. of arthritis. . . . I'm living with my mother in the country. She raises cows and I raise ducks and pheasants. The pheasant cock has horns and looks like some of those devilish people and dogs in Rousseau's paintings." Later she told Lowell, "In our house the liquor is kept in the bathroom closet between the Draino and the plunger, and you don't get any unless you are about dead. The last time I had any was when I dropped the side of the chicken brooder on my foot and broke my toe. . . ."

Louise Bogan, too, left tracks of her life in her letters to literary associates as well as to close friends and lovers over the years. She often took a detached view of herself and wrote about her battles with poverty, her lack of recognition, and her darkest battles with depression with considerable self-amusement and grace, as if enjoying and sharing at some level the frailties of her own human comedy. But she could turn an emotional corner sharply and place her reader face to face with her passions for poetry, politics, a person, or a place. She might write, on the lighter side, to Edmund Wilson, "My life here [Portland, Maine] is one grand sweet song. I have aroused pain in at least three hearts. Two of the hearts are nonagenarian, but what cares saucy Bogan?" One year later, "saucy Bogan" worried to the heart about her stalled writing, earnestly turned to a friend to lament, "My old trick has played me false. This trick pushed the matter off and back, . . . ground into it, as you say, fitted it into form, squared it off. What has failed? The mind that feels, the emotions that think, the silent, in the background, stayer, gatherer, watcher?"

Poet-to-poet she mused to May Sarton, ". . . are not trees and skies and water and earth, nature; to which man is added. . . . To which human life is added, and from which it is not wholly (certainly) derived. And with human life we get all the significant blood and the tears. And the gift of the intellect. And the common law. And art. . . . It is from life that we must draw art. . . ."

Bogan, O'Connor, and White each had his or her own requirements in friendship, each had characteristic tokens to signal and honor friendship.

T.H. White's Brownie, an Irish setter who was the center of his affections for many years, becomes a palpable persona in White's letter to William Potts, his godson. White, through Brownie, plays Merlin-the-teacher to William-as-the-young-King-Arthur. He instructs the boy on the nature of beast and human and distills a gentle homily on courtesy: "[Brownie] is not snobbish, but dignified, you understand. If you pulled her tail, or hugged her without being asked, she wouldn't even dream of biting you, but she would think the worse of you in consequence."

A year later, White wrote again to the boy and touched again his theme of generosity and gentle courtesy between friends. "Brownie is in great form and has just fallen in love with a small black pug about six inches high, who returns her affections. I am not at all jealous as I know it is only a passing craze. I do not make any scenes about it."

When Brownie died, White wrote to William's mother, Mary Potts, "Brownie was the chief factor in my life . . . she was the only perfection I have ever known, she was gentle and loving and trustful and afraid of cows, she was a superb gun-dog. . . . All the happiness I have ever had was from her. . . . This morning before I left, she ate half my breakfast. . . . Now I am eating a cold sausage which she would have liked and stroking the cold silk head. . . ."

Brownie, as the subject of these letters and White's symbol for love itself, gave White a protective distance from his own feelings and yet allowed him to share them directly and truthfully with a family he loved. There are few more intimate sightings of a human being mourning than in White's letter to Mary Potts. He cut very close to the secret artery that feeds human consciousness and, therefore, art.

"Art is not anything that goes on 'among' people," wrote Flannery O'Connor, ". . . it is something that one experiences alone and for the purpose of realizing in a fresh way, through the senses, the mystery of existence."

What greater gift to receive, then, than a letter that quickens the senses, that brings back again into sharp focus the mystery of existence? Of what else is friendship constituted save a shared recognition of that mystery of existence and its very humble daily shadows and shapes, the guises it takes in the sights and sounds of the native towns of friends? □



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PIECING TOGETHER THE CRAFT SCENE TODAY

By Diane Johnson

THE ARTIST AND THE QUILT
Charlotte Robinson, ed.; Knopf, 144 pages, $24.95

AMERICAN CRAFTS
Katherine Pearson; Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 240 pages, $35

Most Americans have inherited or acquired a reverence and affection for quilts, those most appealing of artifacts. We admire their beauty and utility, but beyond this they are mysteriously connected with patriotism, tradition, pioneer endurance. Quiltmaking has had a recent renaissance, witness the splendid and hugely successful museum exhibitions lately, but small exhibits at state fairs and craft shows, like our respect and admiration, have been there all along. *The Artist & the Quilt* is the catalogue of an exhibit of contemporary quilts that will be traveling to museums this fall. The jacket explains it as "a unique collaboration between prominent female artists and quilters. The culmination of seven years' work, these twenty quilts represent a project that draws on traditional materials and techniques while at the same time translating these into the twentieth century through the ideas and designs of contemporary American artists." How many pitfalls this paragraph blithely foretells!

The quilts themselves, and the photographs of them, are as handsome as you could wish, exquisitely worked, original and fresh. The text of the catalogue, on the other hand, is fascinatingly seditious, and ends by convincing the reader that this quilt project was not a good idea at all. Doubts are planted immediately, in the introduction by the editor Charlotte Robinson, who takes pains to assure us that "there is nothing 'inartistic' about the quilt medium," as if we had thought there



From top: Women Rising: Quilt Chart II, Mary Beth Edelson and Marie Griffin Ingalls, 1980; *A Quilt Is a Corset*, Marilyn Lanfear and Theresa Helms, 1981; *Cantilever*, Marcia King and Nancy Vogel, 1982.

were. Lucy Lippard, in an essay about the political implications of the quilts, admits that "the introduction of dominant art-world values into a craft-oriented form or community is a double-sided situation," and the most interesting of the essayists, Miriam Schapiro, herself one of the artists, concludes that "quilts must be accepted on their own terms, not measured against painting or architecture. If we were to remove them from the frame of reference of women's culture, we would obscure a unique aspect of their identity," though that seems to be what the project tries to do. Besides these essays there is a short history of American quiltmaking by Jean Taylor Federico, director of the D.A.R. museum, illustrated by photos of beautiful antique quilts, detailed descriptions of the quilts and their makers by Eleanor Munro, and very many photographs of the artists and quilters. A good "Quilters' Notebook" by Daphne Shuttleworth and Bonnie Persinger explains and illustrates aspects of quiltmaking techniques—some innovative—and will be of use and interest to other quiltmakers. Finally a biographical section describes the accomplishments of the participants, but not as fully as they are described again in the section by Eleanor Munro: "The very day Lanfear's parents moved their household from Waco to Corpus Christi turned out to be Pearl Harbor day: another war, and displacement in the life of a child. Then Lanfear's mother's death, three years ago, was difficult to accept." The effect of all this is too personal, or else full of improbable generalizations, often contradicting each other, and one would hope this book does not fall into the hands of any antifeminist wag.

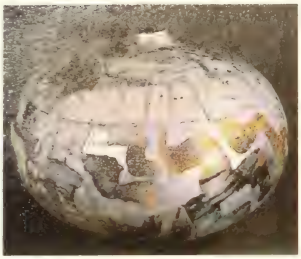
As at any *(Continued on page 22)*



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Above: A Rick Dillingham vase, 1983. *Right: Triangle,* 1982, a wall-hanging in linen by Diane Itter. *Above:* A detail from Judy Kensley McKie's *Table with Cats,* 1977.

(Continued from page 20) art exhibition, there are works you love and others that do not please you. In talking of one quilt, Eleanor Munro acknowledges that "some viewers may feel there is an esthetic problem. . . . Purists of the quilt idiom may find cause for discussion here. The work may impress us as more of a banner than a quilt, an insignia or icon to be displayed on a wall or as a standard. Thus we learn from works that deviate, however strikingly, from the presented norm in this project." Purists of the quilt may well feel that even the presented norm is controversial. Charlotte Robinson, noting the popularity of antique quilts, asks rather plaintively why these should be preferred to the contemporary: "Is it because the quality is higher, the variety greater? Or simply because we revere the old?" No doubt the traditions associated with quilts do evoke a nostalgic response, but it seems that in quiltmaking, as in other mediums, there are things which work best.

To me, the most successful of the quilts here are those which seem to bear in mind the discoveries of earlier quiltmakers about pattern, repetition, geometric form, and the relation of the quilted to the pieced or appliquéd design. This by no means rules out originality. But a work in cloth like Alice Neel's naturalistic depiction of a child wearing a hat need not be called a quilt. The most attractive quilts are the least painterly, while the most painterly might as well be called something like fiber or cloth art. One of the most beautiful quilts here, Marilyn Lanfear and Theresa Helms's wedding quilt, characterized by Munro as the most conceptual of the works because it refers to family events and contains a witty conceit about marriage—the little buttons down the middle, joining the two halves, are buttoned wrongly—also employs geometric forms, subtle colors and is quilted with great expertise. The same is true of Elaine Lustig Cohen and Sharon McKain's handsome Op design, and the nostalgic but experimental pieced, appliquéd, and silkscreened quilt by Miriam Schapiro and Marilyn Price.

Opinion is divided about the geometric form: constraining grid or essential formal ingredient? Schapiro finds it natural and desirable, but Robinson in her quilt wished to dispense with it. She thinks it clever of our mute inglorious mothers, precursors of the modern quilter and "women with no formal education," to have "mastered the exacting geometry of complex hard-edge quilting," but their virtue in her view is to have shown the way for Op Art. Lucy Lippard apologizes that "what is popularly seen as 'repetitive,' 'obsessive,' and 'compulsive' in women's art is in fact a necessity for those whose time comes in small squares . . . inherent female fussiness can also be attributed to creative restlessness. Women are raised with an exaggerated sense of detail." Now these are notions about women that the reader may not until now have entertained.

Lippard goes on to observe that "before the recent surge of feminism few ambitious women artists on the New York art scene would have been caught dead making a quilt." Just so. But now that the quilt bandwagon has reached New York, they are eager to climb on, if only for a moment, and to make clear that they are elevating a mere craft to something "above" minor and amateur status. What a disservice to one of the few female arts, professional or amateur, which has always had value and recognition and been free of hierarchical and racial distinctions. Some of the artists also claim that, by being women, they are especially enabled to understand this form, though the reasonable Miriam Schapiro admits that "at this point in the eighties it is often difficult to tell men's fabric art or patterned art from women's."

The quilts were designed by successful women painters and sculptors and executed by needleworkers who spent thousands of hours and were virtually unpaid, volunteers whose role was analogous to that of metalworkers who cast the sculptures of an artist—but those are men paid a wage. There is a great deal of sanctimonious political rhetoric in this book that only throws into question the claim that this project is a great feminist step forward or that it has progressive political implications. One's sympathies go to the artisan quilters. Though some felt themselves to have gained from collaboration with real "artists," some did not. Even *(Continued on page 24)*



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(Continued from page 22) Schapiro is rather obtuse: "Among the sewing company here represented are many who also have the aspiration of the modernist artist, and so have consciously tried to push their work upward and forward," as if quiltmaking was downward and backward. One poor quilter, sensitive to this attitude, gave up quilting and went back to school to become a photographer. "Suddenly she realized she wasn't a quiltmaker at all . . . she was an artist," says her artist-collaborator Elaine Lustig Cohen. Few of the artists pick up a needle (too busy? inept?), but the fair-minded quilters farmed out the "drudgery" (Munro's word), among groups of women, in exchange for other services.

"Despite good intentions," Lippard recognizes, the introduction of dominant art-world values into the quilt world "can be condescending and counterproductive (witness the feelings reported by a few quilters in this project), or it can provide the seeds of a genuinely motivated creativity emerging from the grassroots of women's own lives and environments," which of course quiltmaking has been all along. She seems to feel it has been undervalued and second-rate since the industrial revolution, "when the homemade and the rural were devalued and not replaced by any new urban culture, thereby intensifying class differences and permitting the powers that be to control the nature of craft and folk art." Strange words from an apologist of a project that seems above all to wish to connect to the powers that be, even by perpetuating the tradition of female amateurism it affects to deplore. Lippard hopes that quilts can help bridge a gap between "high" and "low" culture, but it is she who is preoccupied by the distinction ("*these* contemporary quilts verge on high culture, while others do not, because the women who made these have names, even 'big names'").

How patronizing all of this is to the tradition of quiltmaking women, and how it misses the point of the place of an art or craft in the life of the doer, professional or amateur. Miriam Schapiro surely has a truer view, that quilters were fortunate women, for "while the darkness enveloped many . . . theirs was an environment in which functional objects were life's blood. Intimate, limited, stable, and waiting, their audience never drifted away. . . . Not all quilts were good, nor all made with affection, but those that survive and come down to us as aesthetic surprises have a sense of self-validation that in itself is a splendid heritage."

The Artist & the Quilt seems pretentious indeed next to the handsome, modest, quietly beautiful *American Crafts: A Source Book for the Home,* which is a directory of American craftworkers and crafts galleries, with an explanatory text by Katherine Pearson suggesting ways to look at, feel about, and acquire handmade crafts objects for the home or collection. Of particular interest are the numerous photographs of these serenely beautiful objects, each one expressive of its maker's artistry, satisfaction with his craft, and—judging from the addresses in the directory—general indifference to "the New York art scene." Ceramics, glassware, silver, baskets, quilts, objects and furniture in wood, iron, metalwork of all kinds—these are some of the categories that are described, explained a little and of which examples are given.

Like the objects it discusses, the book is beautiful; its sole defect is again the text, in this case its extreme simplicity. Where there was an opportunity greatly to expand our knowledge of techniques and aesthetic considerations in a number of crafts, this book is instead only a primer:

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This might be useful to someone who knows absolutely nothing about ceramics, but most people are likely to know this much. In some less familiar categories, most readers will find at least something new and interesting. There are nuances of the teapot, for example, which will surprise.

This book would be of real service to anyone who wants, and means to buy, some handblown goblets or a custom chair and is faced with the practical matter of price and getting in touch with the artist. □



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A TASTE FOR OBJECTS NOT SHOWY BUT FINE

An era will end when the contents of the world-famous shop Benjamin Ginsburg, Antiquary, are sold at auction in mid-October

By Elaine Greene

Benjamin Ginsburg has closed his shop on Madison Avenue and consigned its contents to Christie's, who will hold an auction in New York on October 14 and 15, but his passion for antique furnishings continues to absorb him. You need only ask to be shown the favorite pieces in the Ginsburgs' expansive, airy 1905 house to see this passion expressed. Despite delicate health and near-blindness, Benjamin Ginsburg will proceed through each of five downstairs rooms willing to recount, if requested, the story of every piece: where it belongs in his personal and business history and where it stands in the larger world of English and American decorative arts. Although he cannot see them well, he knows every inch of each work.

The dining room's flat-top walnut highboy is "simple for a Philadelphia piece, not overly ambitious or showy but fine." He urges you to examine the unusually delicate dentilation, to feel the fluting at the corners of the case and the subtle rattail carving on the leg. He mentions that this native walnut was prematurely exhausted when used for gunstocks. A small sitting room contains the prize of Benjamin Ginsburg's private collection, a mahogany bombé-base secretary by an unknown Boston maker circa 1760. "There is very little elaborate carving outside," he points out, "but just open the doors!" The surprise is as wonderful as he promises: two concave shells, deep and dark and shapely, crowning the pair of bookshelves. The piece makes him ponder, as he often does, "How did the provincial cabinetmakers in the Colonies do such superb work?"

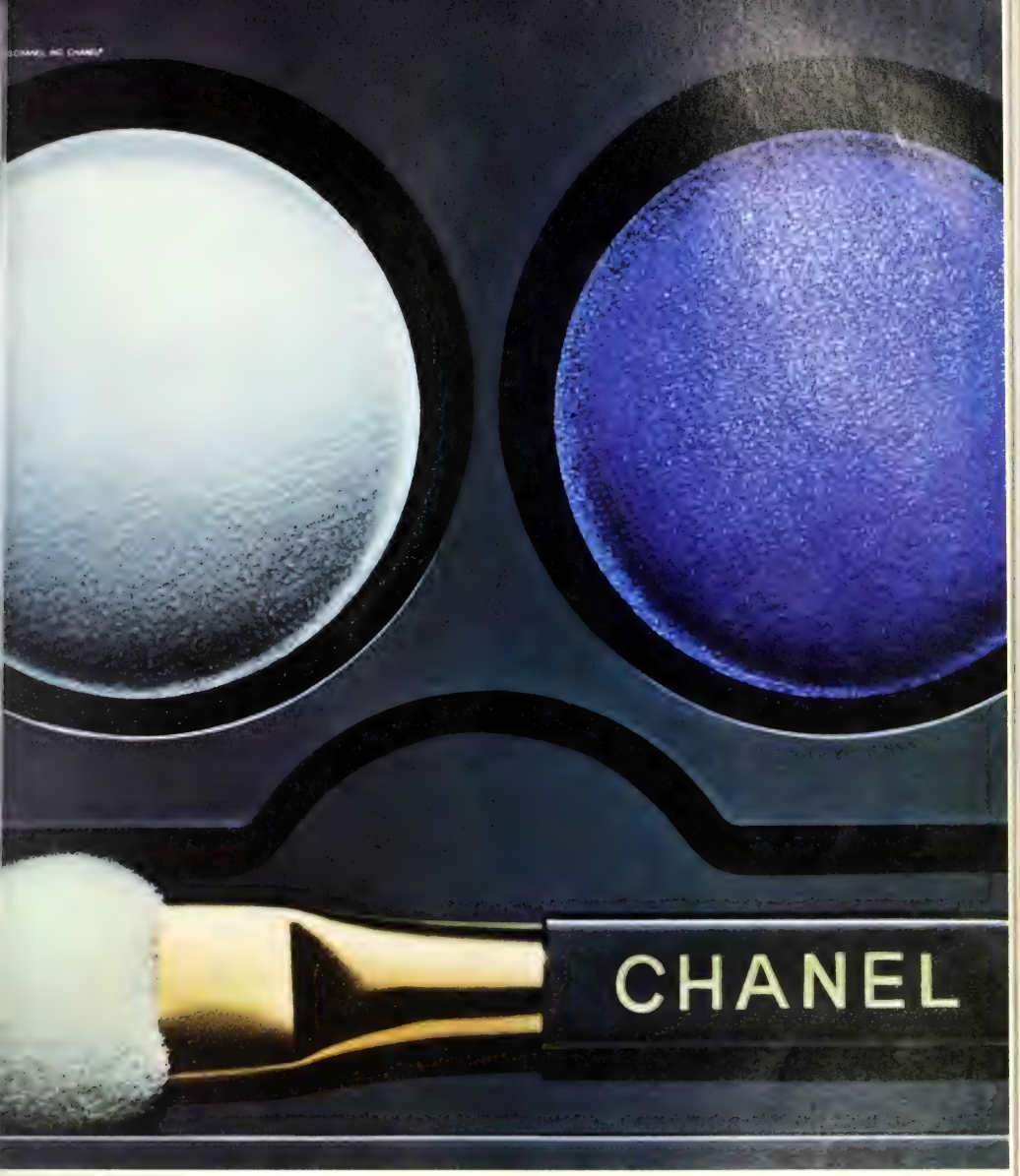


Above: Benjamin and Cora Ginsburg, antiquarians. In a long and distinguished career, he has helped guide many notable collectors. Customers included H.F. du Pont, Henry Ford, Francis P. Garvan, the White House, Colonial Williamsburg. *Below:* To be auctioned, an Empire carved mahogany sofa, circa 1825–35, probably a New York piece.



The shop, Benjamin Ginsburg, Antiquary; Ginsburg and Levy, the firm his father and uncle founded in 1901; and Benjamin Ginsburg, private collector, shared a preference for American over English furniture. In recent decades (the Levy cousins branched out separately in 1973) the dealer stocked about two-thirds American to one-third English pieces. Benjamin Ginsburg finds that the American work "looks better," is "more appealing." Pressed for specifics, he quotes another legendary antiquarian, the late Israel Sack, who said he could tell the difference "by the accent." Ginsburg amplifies this saying, "The American accent is simpler."

Dean Failey, Christie's specialist in American decorative arts in charge of the coming auction, adds, "The American cabinetmaker put more emphasis on line than on decoration compared with the London cabinetmaker. But when you *(Continued on page 30)*



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The kitchen on the opposite page, designed by Charles Morris Mount, is a testament to function and form. COLORCORE is the major ingredient. It gives the unique sculptured countertop the appearance of being a solid block of color. This se[illegible] offers a new alternative to C[illegible] marble, and conventional lam[illegible] The detail of the table base at left [illegible] strates the type of special eff[illegible] be created with COLORCORE

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(Continued from page 26) examine a piece of American furniture from the eighteenth century and an equivalent work by a country Englishman, you may have to identify native woods to know which side of the ocean was the birthplace." Another clue to origins, Failey continues, is the nature of the piece itself. "Americans made highboys far longer than the English did, for example. They had stopped by 1750; we went on until 1800."

Among the superstars in a generally stellar auction will be some American pieces, including a pair of New York Queen Anne chairs made for the Apthorpe family (expected to sell for at least $100,000 each), a Chippendale chest-on-cupboard made for the Carroll family of Baltimore by a Maryland cabinetmaker circa 1765–85, a Seymour-attributed Federal sideboard, and a New York Chippendale block-front kneehole bureau. Important ceramics, especially English delft and Whieldon, will also draw museum curators and collectors, as will a group of seventeenth-century needlework pictures.

The Colonists often produced their own furniture, but they were required by English law to buy factory-made goods from the mother country. Thus the authentic Colonial-period room contains American furniture with English brasses, English ceramics (or Chinese Export sold by the English), and fine English fabrics (homespun would be local because it was, literally, spun at home).

Ginsburg and Levy and later Benjamin Ginsburg, Antiquary, were always known for the diversity of their stock. Resisting the trend to specialization that overtook other dealers, they continued the commitment of the original Ginsburg (Benjamin's father, John) and the original Levy (John's brother-in-law) to stock everything a period room would require. When Dean Failey says that the auction will mark "the end of an era," he is referring to this wide diversity.

Decorative accessories, especially textiles, became the province of Cora Ginsburg, Benjamin's wife of more than fifty years. Although she was not a member of the firm, she was an important buyer and made countless trips abroad, sending valuable shipments to the shop. When the doors closed on the famous five-story brick row house at 815 Madison Avenue last spring, Mrs. Ginsburg took her textiles and costumes just up the street to a suite of rooms, where she sees her museum and private clients by appointment. Like her husband, Cora Ginsburg is most deeply interested in the eighteenth century. "I love the costumes of this period, their elegance and simplicity and the excellent quality of the silk or wool." In her field she has become a well-known scholar. When she lectures at museums and historic societies, she finds that she is talking not only about materials and styles, but about times and customs. "Knowing clothing means knowing social history," she says.



A Pennsylvania Chippendale tall case clock circa 1790–1810.

Cora Ginsburg's understanding of the personal side of costumes is quicky revealed by her answer to the often-asked question, "Were people really smaller in earlier times?" Mrs. Ginsburg explains that she frequently sees evidence of alterations: a sleeve or bodice remade in a later fashion, a waist made smaller for an original owner's daughter. "There were many large dresses and only these could be altered and re-altered and used until they fell apart. Smaller dresses are impossible to remake, so they would end up in attic trunks perfectly preserved." She adds, "People tend to collect the clothing of their youth, before they gain weight—their wedding dress, their first ball dress." Mrs. Ginsburg says this fondly. For her, "Old things are not holy. My feeling about them is quite playful. I like to think of the fun and the pleasure they once brought and still bring."

Benjamin and Cora Ginsburg, alike in their love for antiques that are "not overly ambitious or showy but fine," are fellow humanists who never lose sight of the living people who made and used their treasures.



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By Christina de Liagre



Andrée Putman on a Mallet-Stevens dining chair on Eileen Gray's "Blackboard" rug in her New York showroom

"Good taste doesn't exist." Andrée Putman says emphatically. Coming from France's high priestess of style, that kind of pronouncement begs investigation. After all, Yves Saint Laurent, Karl Lagerfeld, Thierry Mugler, Claude Montana, Tan Giudicelli, Azzedine Alaia—to name but a few of fashion's finest—have all turned to interior designer Putman for her special imprint, whether in the home, at the office, or in their boutiques.

As if being "decorator darling" to some of the most stylish people in the world were not enough, Putman has also become a force in "curating" the innovators of modern twentieth-century furniture whose works she exactingly reproduces through her firm Écart International. Eileen Gray and other great designers of the Modern Movement have been raised from obscurity thanks to Putman's daring and keen sense of timeless style.

To Putman, style begins with freedom from what is generally regarded as good taste. "What some would call lack of taste," Putman continues in her throaty late-late show voice, "to me is basically a lack of freedom. A place is beautiful insofar as a person feels free to express the interesting contrasts that come from deep down inside, from something that has been lived. That's why artists, I think, usually create the most beautiful houses—because they have that freedom; every object is an expression of themselves. If things truly belong to you, they will work. By the same token," Putman continues, "poor taste has always fascinated me. Collectors, for example, often have a taste for the absurd, as I do myself. In the ugly, the absurd, the sentimental, there is the charm of sincerity. Anglo-Saxons are much more prone to this kind of casual, offhand, highly personal expression. So many things are more fascinating when they are improvised, when they are more real.

"Of course," Putman continues, "most French still think they are more real just because they are French and because they had Versailles and Louis XIV! Many are still in the rut of obeying the dictums of inherited style."

There are exceptions, fortunately, as Putman fondly recounts the case of the celebrated Parisian hostess, Vicomtesse de Noailles: "There in one of the most beautiful houses, among exquisite antiques, the Rembrandts, the Picassos, the Goyas, right there in her drawing room, she would hang up a favorite picture postcard. She had the insolence to mix what was most precious, most admirable, most renowned with some personal discovery of hers, a souvenir from a trip, something that made her laugh. The freedom to do such a thing is beauty."

Born into the *berceau de bon gout,* Parisienne Putman has always sought out that kind of freedom. While her contemporaries were respectfully decorating their apartments in Louis XV, she was out picking up odd pieces of furniture *(Continued on page 34)*



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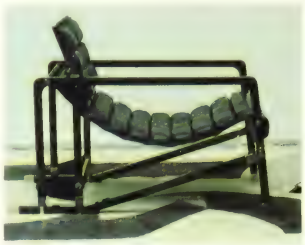
(Continued from page 32) by designers Breuer, Mies van der Rohe, Le Corbusier, Art Deco *ébéniste* Jacques-Emile Ruhlmann, or French architect Robert Mallet-Stevens. And while they were steeping themselves in Trianon blue and Empire green, Putman was already practicing near-absence of color, letting paintings and flowers do the job. "We are suffering from an overdose of color in life as it is," she says. "Pastel colors, pale colors are wonderful, but they count too much." Putman's wardrobe is exclusively black and white, making her couture figure one of the more unmistakable silhouettes in town.

Drafted into the design business by friends (Le Tout Paris in fashion circles) who admired what she had done in her own home, Putman immediately established herself against the norms of the decorating business such as it continued to be practiced in France. "I deplore the idea of decoration, like putting on so much makeup, prettying things up," she says, extinguishing her cigarette in an enormous empty black ashtray with measured finesse, making a perfect (black-and-white) still-life composition. "I would never call myself a decorator, but an interior designer. Space and light are the key starting points for me. In second place, I would put materials, textures. I think they should be either extremely present because they are sufficiently interesting visually to be used a lot, or I also like the idea of total absence—the way one might say a woman was so elegant, one didn't even notice what she was wearing. I like the idea of a house being so beautiful it can't really be described. The elements of success should be so simple, and calm, and *leger á vivre* that they almost cease to exist."

Though she has always gone against the grain, it was only after a separation in middle age that Putman was catapulted into her own space—the empty page, as she puts it, that became the turning point in her life. "I had to move," she explains. "My new place was completely empty for one year. I had four pieces of furniture and no paintings." She transformed an architecturally ordinary loft-like printing atelier into one of the most spectacular spaces in Paris, again flying in the face of French upper-class tradition by living, eating, sleeping, and entertaining in the same room. Putman's place was living testimony to a new kind of French style—that some would call "eclectic minimalism."

"The most important thing to me is that a house be timeless," Putman affirms. "I have no interest whatsoever in nostalgia. I'm interested only in things that do not age."

With that her credo, Putman decided to reproduce certain timeless designs of the forgotten innovators of modern twentieth-century furniture. In 1978 she founded Écart International to specialize in exact re-editions of furnishings made by Eileen Gray, Antoni Gaudí, Mariano Fortuny, Van Ravensteyn, J.J.P. Oud, the early modern Dutch architect, and lesser-known but interesting talents such as French architects Mallet-Stevens, René Herbst, Michel Duffet. These are a few of the designers, says Putman, who worked alone, were not part of any school, and remained largely unrecognized during their lifetimes. They were, as she puts it, "visionaries," ahead of their time and the public taste. Adds Putman, "I identify with them."





Top: The Eileen Gray Transat chair. *Below:* J.J.P. Oud's blue and black-lacquer metal dining-room set in the Écart showroom, Paris.

It all started with Putman's passion for the designs of Eileen Gray, the Irish-born designer who lived and worked in Paris until her death at age 97 in 1976. "I was to have met her twice," recalls Putman, "and to my despair, both meetings fell through." (On her way to the second meeting Gray tripped and ran her stocking. She returned home, feeling she couldn't possibly appear at a rendezvous with a runner. Gray died shortly thereafter.) Putman nevertheless had a rendezvous with destiny insofar as Gray's artistic legacy was concerned: a subsequent meeting with Prunella Clough, an English painter and niece of Gray's, made it possible—as executor of the estate—for Putman to represent some of the designer's work.

Putman reproduced several of Gray's provocative rugs (they had created a scandal at the 1927 Paris salon)—most notably one called "Blackboard," with white ruler markings on a black background—in time for the New York Museum of Modern Art's salute to the designer in 1980. A re-edition of Gray's Transat deck chair of chrome, lacquer, and leather triumphed shortly thereafter, followed by the 1928 Satellite mirror—both designs still astonishing in their modernity over half a century later.

A suite of subsequent "accidents and love affairs," as Putman puts it, led to further acquisitions in this highly personal collection. While strolling through the Mariano Fortuny museum in Venice, Putman fell for an umbrellaed reflector floor lamp that Fortuny used in his studio all his life. She searched out the family lawyer. "I saw these incredible lamps that look like they were done today, they were so High Tech—and they were designed in 1907! Fortuny really invented indirect lighting."

From Spain she acquired the rights to curvaceous oak furniture designed by Antoni Gaudí and had some of the Catalan arch- *(Continued on page 36)*

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(Continued from page 34) itect's elaborate brass hardware fixtures reproduced.

Like most of the designers she champions, Putman has always been ahead of her time. In the mid-sixties, as a stylist for Prisunic, the French budget store chain, she stunned the patrons with a catalogue of unheard-of items on the order of all-white tableware. In those days, busy plates were *de rigueur*. Original art for every pocketbook was the next innovation: she got the supermarket to sell original lithographs in limited editions of the great artists of the period—Alechinsky, Bram van Velde, Wilfredo Lam, Niki de Saint Phalle.

Then in the early seventies she was artistic director of a group that discovered and launched such design talents as Jean Muir, Castelbajac, Issey Miyake. But Créateurs et Industrie, the large loft store on the Left Bank, offering what Putman considered tops in furniture and fashion, folded for being *too* much of an advance pulse.

Having gained a reputation for an unstinting sense of quality, Putman is actually sought after by those anxious to revive something long loved and lost. The grandchildren of French architect Robert Mallet-Stevens approached her with the rights to one of Ecart's best-sellers: a 1928 lacquered metal side chair with flat metal inserts in the back. And recently photographer Jacques-Henri Lartigue came up with a photo of his quarters as a man of eighteen. Could Ecart reproduce the black-and-white lacquered table pictured there that he had made himself at the time?

Putman again met the challenge. A resounding success from Paris to Tokyo to San Francisco to New York (where her work is shown in a loft showroom downtown—Furniture of the Twentieth Century), Putman has some forty re-editions to her credit, all the while continuing to meet increasing demands as interior designer. A hotel in the Murray Hill section of New York, scheduled to open in January 1984, is a recent chef-d'oeuvre, and lest the clients worry, the wrinkled sheets are signed by Putman too, and are merely "trompe l'oeil"!

With Europe firmly in hand, Putman has designs on the United States. Millions may see the magic for themselves this fall in Putman's model rooms assembled for Bloomingdale's "Fête de France" in New York (through the beginning of November). Selected as one of France's top talents, Putman again proves her flair for the *mélange étrange:* "I've covered a Bloomingdale's sofa with some of my Wamsutta trompe-l'oeil sheeting (not wrinkled this time but quilted) and with it I've used a nineteenth-century black iron floor lamp from Japan, and a magnificent Charles Eames screen from the forties. I am also unveiling my most recent re-edition: two Mallet-Stevens lounge chairs designed for the Vicomtesse de Noailles's celebrated villa in the south of France." The space has no particular architectural definition to it, and true to Putman's trademark, cannot be situated in time.

Even though most of Ecart's reproductions come out of the twenties and thirties, Andrée Putman hastens to clear up any misconceptions. Starting out with Frenchman Sascha Ketoff, she has found some exciting young talent around, and these are the people she is backing now—provided their work fits in with Ecart's rigorous line of timelessness and quality.

"My goal," she says, "is to recognize the new and mix it with the classics. A total thirties environment is like a total anything environment, poisoned by excess and too much purity. Houses are not meant to be so true to a period that they overpower the people who live there. That's why I always speak of doing 'portraits of people.' I believe in the audacity of oppositions (leather bedspread and white lace pillows), a mix of rich and poor (you won't see the orchid if the pot's too precious), a blend of softness and graphics, a feeling of formal and informal."

Andrée Putman stops this enrapturing flow of words for a moment while you wonder what she could possibly add. Her early years as a journalist make for interviews as heady as a roller-coaster ride with the train of thought never lost no matter how many turns you take. Brushing her blond hair back off her brow with a gesture so perfect you'd think the cameras were rolling for the denouement, Andrée Putman sums up: "I especially believe in daring. I also love mistakes. They can turn into something ravishing and charming."

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TALIESIN THE THIRD

Frank Lloyd Wright redecorated a Plaza suite as his New York command post while he built the Guggenheim

By Herbert Muschamp

By 1953 Frank Lloyd Wright's trips to New York were so frequent that he decided to rent Suite 223 at the Plaza Hotel on a permanent basis—permanent, that is, for the five years that remained him. He redecorated the suite's two rooms in a style that he felt struck the correct note of urban sophistication, and recaptured the original elegance of the rooms before they had been ruined by the period furniture styles preferred by the management's "inferior desecrators."



Suite 223. Edwardian with an overlay of fifties-style *shibui*

Wright had circular mirrors set into the top of the room's arched windows to conceal indirect lighting. Deep red velvet curtains swept from ceiling to floor, their pull cords weighted at the ends by balls of clear crystal. On the walls, panels of gold Japanese paper were framed by light-rose-colored borders. Black lacquered tables and chairs, edged with red lacquer, completed the scheme. While the suite's small bedroom afforded the Wrights some privacy, "a bedlam of activity" reigned in the combination workroom, office, and sitting room where Wright entertained clients, gave interviews to the press, and worked on projects with the volunteer assistance of former apprentices who had "established themselves as architects and editors in the self-centered city," as Mrs. Wright put it with somewhat sour irony. "They take turns taking days off from their office work to help in various ways."

"The Taliesin atmosphere of work permeated the apartment for five years until January 7, 1959—the last time we were there," Olgivanna Wright later recalled. And her reminiscence of Suite 223 is a telling evocation of the place New York had made in the pattern of their lives. After Wright's death in April of 1959, "William Short, the superintendent of the Guggenheim Museum, and a few others carefully packed the furniture and a truck brought it to Taliesin. This furniture now graces our Forest House in Wisconsin a mile from Taliesin, giving it a touch of elegance. Looking out of the Forest House windows, I can see a smooth lawn, maple trees, and pines. I also see Central Park, Fifth Avenue, and 59th Street. I hear our Wisconsin meadowlarks and cardinals, robins, and mourning doves. I also hear the pigeons outside on the sill of the Plaza windows—forever cooing and fighting each other. I hear Mr. Wright saying, 'Look at that speckled pigeon—he is the boss—the rest are afraid of him.' And we watched him first strut on the thin iron rail, then take off for flight over the traffic signals among the blackened skyscrapers. Many lives within us for a time run parallel to one another, later to be fused until there is no separation."

This fond recollection of the park and the pigeons may seem somewhat out of character for a woman who was if anything even more outspoken than her husband in her distaste for urban life. Yet her memory's double exposure of Taliesin and New York was an accurate picture, for in later years Wright's town *(Continued on page 44)*

ograph by David Hamilton





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(Continued from page 40) and country life became increasingly intertwined. As Mrs. Wright had written the year before his death,

> For the last twenty years we have always stayed at the Hotel Plaza in New York City. I remember on one of those trips our good friend, the late Howard Myers, editor of the *Architectural Forum*, sent us a bouquet of flowers, and on the card was written, "Welcome to Taliesin the Third." We all laughed then, thinking it a big joke. But the kindly jest proved to be prophecy. Now it truly is becoming Taliesin the Third.

Wright retained the New York base primarily to supervise a number of projects under commission or construction in the East during these years: houses in Rye and Pleasantville, the Manhattan Sports Pavilion project, the Lenkurt Electric Company project on Long Island, the Mercedes-Benz (originally Hoffman Jaguar) showroom on Park Avenue, and most notably of course, the museum whose patron, Solomon R. Guggenheim, also had a suite at the hotel.

But Wright's suite at the Plaza was more than a grand-luxe foreman's hut. It was a handsomely appointed symbol of Wright's hugely successful rejuvenation. His passage from the "worm's eye view" of New York in the twenties to a treetop-view suite at the Plaza in the fifties was just the kind of success story for which Manhattan has always provided a thrilling dramatic backdrop. More than this, however, Taliesin the Third was both a logical culmination and a vital complement to Wright's life at the two "Usonian" Taliesins. This last Wright outpost *east* of Buffalo was instrumental in resolving the creative conflicts that had brought his career to a halt more than forty years before.

At Taliesin the Third, Wright had turned 180 degrees away from the days, thirty years before, when he had come to New York to escape "the newspapers' pursuit of news." Now he came to obtain the maximum coverage. "At times Mr. Wright is interviewed by newspapermen in one room," noted his wife, "while several clients wait in another." The protocol is suggestive. In New York, Wright's more conventional "professional" obligations were subordinated to the business of calling up such writers and editors as Douglas Haskell, Edgar Kaufmann Jr., Cranston Jones, and "young Brendan Gill," who by then had replaced Alexander Woollcott as Wright's most widely read self-appointed New York publicist.



Wright used this as his workroom, the lacquer table as a drafting board.

Yet Wright's purpose in coming to the city was not just to bask in a flattering shade of limelight, but on the contrary to preserve the posture of an iconoclast, as though without the world against him there could be no truth. Taliesin the Third crystallized his relationship with the city; to maintain a permanent apartment at an address used primarily for transients dramatized the role of Professional Outsider, one of Wright's most highly prized creations.

Half a century after the Chicago World's Fair, Wright's Plaza suite overlooked the best view in New York: Central Park, the masterpiece of one of Louis Sullivan's most detested East Coast enemies, Frederick Law Olmsted, who had also laid out the landscape for the Fair. Contrasted with the seedy hotel in which Sullivan had died, Wright's splendid accommodations (he claimed they had once been Diamond Jim Brady's) might be taken as proof that American architecture had indeed recovered fifty years after the Fair, just when Sullivan said it would. But if Sullivan prevailed at Taliesins East and West, where Wright worked to achieve his mentor's "rule that would admit no exceptions," Taliesin the Third was pure Burnham, a midway booth in which Wright unveiled big plans "to stir men's blood": the Guggenheim Museum, the Mile-High Illinois, as well as smaller plans that enhanced the figure of Wright himself. They were suitable star vehicles for a personality people wanted to see.

"The Broadway Creed has covered the country pretty much until it has Hollywood on its other end," Wright observed knowingly. And though unable to cover the country with buildings, he was adept at borrowing techniques from the "other end." In the earliest days of the Taliesin Fellowship, he had used the picture show as a means of extending hospitality and allaying suspicion in the Spring Green community; now he used a publicist's flair to extend his reputation around the world. Like a seasoned contract player, he knew precisely what was expected and had no wish to disappoint his fans. His walking stick and cape were theatrical props, like Dietrich's cigarette; his irascibility was polished to the point of caricature. If he was too old for front-page love-nest exposés, his quips were far more dependable copy.

There are those for whom such theatrics were troubling in an artist of such integrity, the resemblance to Burnham disturbing to a view of American architectural history that has placed them poles apart. Yet it was not a sudden, late intrusion, nor was it especially corrupt. Though Taliesin the Third was to some degree a hypocritical betrayal of the Fellowship's uncompromising stance, it was also a clear epiphany of Wright's true intentions, a fulfillment of the Fellowship's charter to take Wright's message to the world. □

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OH, TO BE IN ENGLAND

Now that English antiques are in again, London's Grosvenor and Burlington House fairs are more popular than ever

By Nancy Richardson

We Americans are famous for our love of genteel English eighteenth-century brown wood furniture with its friendly color, staunch construction, simple silhouette, and unabashed functionality. For years dealers have banked on the safe handsomeness of this brown-wood look, jazzing it up occasionally with Chinese lacquer furniture and porcelain made for the English market. The major center for buying English furniture has always been London, and since 1934 American dealers and collectors have poured in at the height of the June season to buy at a particularly prestigious source.

By June of 1983, however, anybody with the view that what was for sale at The Grosvenor House Antiques Fair was limited to British sanity and civility would have missed half the fun. The fair has not been held in the usual way for the last four years because of a chambermaids' strike at the hotel. It reappeared in June as a "new" fair, thereby causing an unpleasant but stimulating schism in the antiques world. The "old" Grosvenor House Fair and many of its dealers had moved to the Royal Academy two years ago. As The Burlington House Fair they are offering a rival exhibition this month, October 20–29, that boasts the patronage of the Queen Mother and should prove that there is room for two major fairs.

Although the dealers at Grosvenor House offered enough sensible eighteenth-century English furniture to give the fair the expected English flavor, the best pieces—apart from several unusual eighteenth-century lacquer pieces—were sometimes French, and often nineteenth century. Along the several main aisles of the enormous Grosvenor House ballroom 85 dealers' stands offered special exhibition pieces held back until the fair opened. The English dealers seemed to have more interesting and perhaps better quality things than their American counterparts at the Winter Antiques Show, which is more a reflection of what the American public will buy at home than the dealers' own taste. The day before the fair opened, there was a preview for dealers, and almost every well-known dealer in Europe and America showed up, *shopped* and *bought* in those first few hours. Ten million pounds' worth of business was done in the first 24 hours—much of it by Americans. What was at work was more complicated than the obvious sinking pound.





Top. In its original frame, *A Young Boy in Red* by Jean Baptiste Huet, may have been a study for a pastoral scene. It belonged to Edmond de Rothschild, more recently to Baron Alexis de Redé. Harari & Johns, London. *Above.* A small Queen Anne lady's chair covered in nineteenth-century needlework. Christopher Clarke, Gloucestershire.

The glamour of collecting furniture and works of art has been as strong in the last few years with a new group of American collectors as it was in the sixties and seventies when collectors like the Wrightsmans, the Fords, the Firestones, and the Linskys were most active. The odds that large antiques shows—like the Grosvenor House; the Burlington House; the Winter Antiques Show in New York, every January; the French Biennale in Paris, every other October; as well as the Biennale in Monte Carlo, every other August—will produce at least a few world-class works of art good enough to bring collectors from all over the world, not to look for bargains or take advantage of currency fluctuations but to seek out the extraordinary. The excitement in the first hours of these antiques fairs is equaled only by some of the most important of Sotheby's and Christie's sales, which also draw an international audience. *(Continued on page 58)*



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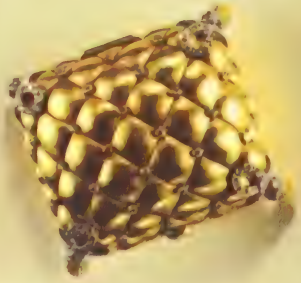
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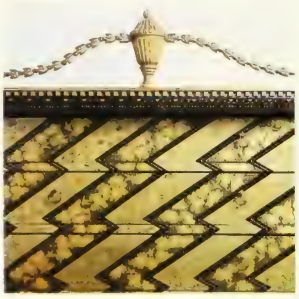
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CELANESE FORTREL

*(Continued from page 54)*There are perhaps sixty individual collectors worldwide as well as fifteen museums and institutions that form the core and fashionability of this market. With the number of collectors growing, however, the problem for the marketplace is to present enough top-quality material to satisfy the demand. Although there were many good-looking and expensive things at the Grosvenor House, nothing the dealers had to offer rivaled the things in the National Art-Collections Fund (NACF) exhibition at the center of the fair, which consisted of works of art bought by this fund and given to English museums. One of its most compelling exhibits was a piece of furniture that the English calmly call a bureau dressing table. Attributed to John Channon and probably made around 1740, this piece has been the property of the Victoria & Albert since 1954 thanks to NACF. It is a masterpiece in curving, bulging mahogany that embodies a joyous collision of sensibilities with its massive, masculine silhouette and giddy, elegant rococo ormolu mounts. What *was* top quality and also for sale was a group of gold boxes and a ruby-and-diamond necklace from Napoleon's crown jewels, both at S.J. Phillips. Asprey offered a suite of giltwood settees and six armchairs attributed to John Cobb. John Keil had an important twelve-panel eighteenth-century Ch'ien Lung screen for £85,000 and a gilt and black lacquer secretary in an unusual geometric design for £45,000. Mallett—not big Mallett on New Bond Street but little Mallett at Bourdon House—displayed a pair of Ming Buddhist temple dogs in brown lacquer for £65,000 as well as an eighteenth-century Italian center table inlaid with a scrolling marquetry of flowers, lizards, and birds in exotic woods and mother-of-pearl. Temple Williams, who started the taste for Regency furniture in London during the blitz, sold a beautiful George II walnut armchair and a giltwood Gothic Revival armchair designed by Pugin. Ian Hastie's Italian grotto chair was sold within minutes after the fair opened; a pair of Scottish table globes—one terrestrial, one celestial—







Top. Detail of a black-lacquer secretary with zigzag gilt decoration made in China for the European market. John Keil Ltd., London. *Center:* Fine George III rosewood and satinwood architects' drawing table with rising easel top, circa 1775. Stair & Company, London. *Below:* Detail of a rare miniature scarlet lacquer bureau bookcase, gilt chinoiserie decoration. English, 1710. Mallett at Bourdon House, London.

as well as a French clock with a recli
ing lady in ormolu by Balthazar Lie
taud were also indicative of Hastie
taste. Christopher Clarke, like Hasti
is known for unusual things and ol
jects with a strong sculptural quality.
charming aside in Clarke's booth was
small Queen Anne lady's chair cover
in nineteenth-century needlewor
Ciancimino, the best dealer in Londo
for Japanese lacquer, presented amor
other things a handsome Edo-perio
lacquer traveling chest used to store a
mor for the shogun. Barry Sainsbur
an Englishman who tempers the lo
of the object with a strong sense of de
oration and deals in Oriental works
art, displayed a rare Ming-dynast
black lacquer and pearl table fo
£22,500. The Englishness of the fa
was handsomely represented by Sta
with a pair of rare Adam-inspired d
milune card tables for £18,000 mad
around 1780 and by Crowther of Syo
Lodge, which deals in garden orn
ment, paneling, and chimneypieces
with a statue of a Saxon deity made or
ginally for Stowe Park. Iona, the ga
lery that specializes in Englis
nineteenth-century primitive painting
of dogs, pigs, poultry, and horses, sol
a pair of Barraud paintings of grey
hounds they bought black with di
and unrecognized at a Christie's Eas
sale in New York last winter. Late
nineteenth-century dog pictures an
the school of painters described as "a
ter Landseer" were little in evidence a
it seemed that American buyers ha
temporarily exhausted that market.

The Grosvenor House attracts ma
jor picture dealers as well. Richar
Green offered a charming Tissot a
well as a Dutch scene of ducks an
geese at a lake by M. de Hondecoete
and a painting of a Victorian interio
with child and dogs by Alfred d
Dreux. Harari & Johns offered a
eclectic group of pictures that include
a charming oval painting of a child b
Jean-Baptiste Huet.

No English antiques fair would b
complete without a complement of En
glish sporting pictures. Arthur Ack
ermann (not associated with the Ack
ermann's in New York since befor
World War II) *(Continued on page 60)*



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Reading the News, English domestic scene by J.J. Tissot, about 1874.

(Continued from page 58) produce paintings by several of the bigges names in that field—Ferneley, J.F Herring, Ben Marshall, and James Pol lard. Less expensive but unusual wa an aquatint of a painting by Stubbs *Eclipse, Groom, Jockey,* now owned b Paul Mellon—£875.

Most porcelain dealers were at th Dorchester Hotel, where they tool part in the second year of The Interna tional Ceramics Fair organized by dealers Brian and Anna Haughton Sotheby's porcelain expert in New York, Letitia Roberts, described wha she saw as "expensive but so beauti ful. The Ceramics Fair is designed t revive a taste porcelain dealers think is in decline. Our grandparents collecte porcelain avidly, but it's not clea whether our generation will acquir the taste."

New York dealer Hervé Aaron came to London in June to see how the mar ket was doing. He bought for his shop at the Grosvenor House, but he bought for himself at the Olympia an tiques fair on Kensington High Street which finished a weeklong exhibition just before the Grosvenor House opened. At the Olympia two hundred dealers take stands in a hall that's a cross between an airplane hangar and the Bronx Botanical Garden conserva tory. On a wide balcony upstairs are dealers in furniture before 1830. Downstairs *(Continued on page 62)*



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Top: Marquetry center table inlaid with rare woods and mother-of-pearl. Italian, circa 1775. Mallett at Bourdon House, London. *Above:* One of a pair of greyhounds, H. Barraud, circa 1850. Iona Antiques, London.

(Continued from page 60) everything dates before 1930. It's upstairs that Hervé Aaron found his bookcase, and downstairs that decorative trends show up. This year there were Edwardian accessories—dressing table sets in ivory, tortoise, silver—Victorian versions of eighteenth-century furniture, English copies of paintings by Mme. Vigée Le Brun, some nineteenth-century "boulle" cabinets, and furnishing-furniture secretaries with broken-pediment tops. Many dealers come from Portobello Road, and hordes of American dealers buy from them. A good-looking oak drum table was going for £1,750 at Ferneyhough.

Michael Davis, shipper of art and furniture and originator of the first credit card for buying antiques, was shipping goods airmail at sea-rate charges at the Grosvenor House. The same will be true at the Burlington, where the fair's theme is royal patronage. But neither Zuccarelli's portrait of Burlington House lent by the Queen nor the Chinese wallpaper lent by the Queen Mother will be among the things you can ship. □

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A TOURIST IN THE CURIOUS SOUTHWEST

By Charles Maclean

There's no place on earth like the American West for unashamed tourism. Forget about "travel": this is not Baedeker country. No danger of a "Bruce Chatwin I presume" encounter on the northern rim of the Grand Canyon. Out west you just hop in a car and drive. But with all that space to do it in, as you drone along the Interstate in a convoy of "snowbirds" (migratory senior citizens cruising blithely southward in their road-hogging R.V.s), touring can sometimes take on the epic dimensions of a voyage.



Once grown accustomed to the scenery, there's not a lot out there to distract one from the driving—none of the historical overcrowding, the cultural bloat that can make sightseeing in Europe more a duty than a pleasure. But the West, as I learned again on a recent tour of Arizona and New Mexico, has its share of surprises and imperatives.

Although I'd never visited the Southwest before, I was returning to the scene—or the time zone, at least—of my first introduction to America. At seventeen, fresh out of English public school, I spent six months in northern Colorado working on a cattle ranch called the Lazy Shamrock. A real education, it seemed to me then. After the ranch I planned to make my way south on horseback and ride down to Mexico—"travel," in other words. It didn't quite work out that way. One of the cowboys obliging



Top The view from Goulding's Trading Post, Monument Valley, Utah, twenty miles outside Mexican Hat. *Below:* Tourist and author Maclean.

sold me a horse tha
died before I could g
it through the gates
the corral, and I ende
up catching the bus
California. Years late
back on the wester
trail, I found myself se
ting out from down
town Las Vegas in
rented four-door "mi
size"—the Complea
Tourist.

Everyone warned m
that Las Vegas is a dyin
city, yet the plac
seemed to be hummin
with life, the great pa
aces of the Strip to hav
lost none of their fable
glitter. It wasn't until
reached the Vegan sub
urbs, where snowbird
come to roost in luxur
encampments calle
"home-tels," that I be
gan to get the picture

At the edge of the desert a palm
fringed oasis materialized out of th
shimmering dust. On the lookout fo
the Liberace Museum, I'd almos
pulled off the road when I realized tha
the magnificent white and gold build
ing was in fact a mortuary—the first i
a series of sumptuous funeral parlors
would find strung out across the retire
ment reservations of the Southwes
like a rope of dowager's pearls. Snow
birds, alas, flock to Las Vegas and th
cities of the sun to escape a declinin
number of winters.

On the way to Phoenix, trying t
adapt to the splendors and the mono
tony of desert driving, I spent an hou
in the sleepy little town of Wikieup,
self-proclaimed *(Continued on page 68)*

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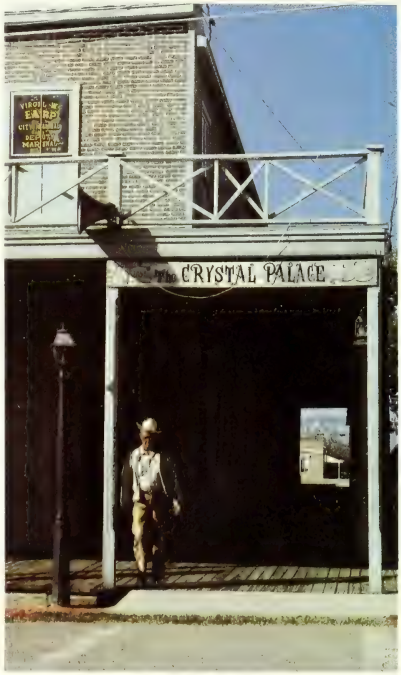
Ready For Rio?

(Continued from page 64) "rattler capital of the world," watching armed housewives roam the sagebrush in competition for the largest diamondback. Impressed, I drove on to Wickenburg, undisputed "dude-ranch capital of the world," and by late evening reached Scottsdale, which would like to call itself the "lovely homes" capital of the world, but is too discreet.

In Why, Arizona (included in my itinerary for its name), the road forks. Not a lot else happens. I stopped the car in the middle of a cactus forest and walked out a little way into the desert. Suddenly I sensed I was no longer alone. Saguaro cactus with their raised traffic-cop arms have a strangely human quality about them (the reason they're always getting shot at, maimed, set on fire), but they don't talk. It was a voice, a coughing sound I'd heard. I wheeled around. A coyote, slipping from behind a rock, turned to look at me with incurious yellow eyes, then sauntered off in the direction of Mexico.

Twenty miles into Papago Indian country and no sign yet of human habitation. A vast silver-green wilderness rolls around the car windows. The road dips and rises to accommodate the *arroyos*. I get the sensation of being on a small boat ploughing through a heavy ocean swell. Something red glimpsed on the horizon resurfaces miles on as a Coca-Cola van parked outside a trading post selling baskets and pottery. Set back from the road, TV antennas poking up among the cactus, a modest settlement with a corral full of pinto horses turns out to be Quijotoa—Papago capital of the world. The houses are not old, but unlike the manors of Scottsdale they blend into the landscape as if they'd always been there.

At the edge of the reservation stands San Xavier del Bac, a fine mission church built by the Franciscans in the late eighteenth century. Arriving after sunset I found the doors of the church locked, but there was still enough light to admire its half-Moorish, half-Byzantine exterior silhouetted against the rose-colored Santa Catalina mountains. It was a warm evening and I stood listening to the Indian choir endlessly practice a Tex-Mex version of "Faith of Our Fathers," all steel guitars and tinny trumpets, as the first stars came out over the desert.



The author drank a sarsaparilla at this spot in Tombstone, Arizona.

In Tucson, once an easy-going cow town that's been turned into a glorified health spa, I stayed in sybaritic luxury at the Hacienda del Sol, an exceptionally mellow resort-ranch in the foothills of the Catalinas. The Norwegian chef, Herr Hoelli, who spends the summer months cooking for "the crowned heads of Scandinavia," has a reputation—richly deserved—for producing the most delicious food in the Southwest.

After an instructive morning at the nearby Sonora Desert Museum looking at mountain lions, black widow spiders, wolves, Gila monsters, and an 11,000-year-old sloth dropping found in a local cave—a prize exhibit that somehow proves that the Arizona desert was once covered over by the Pacific Ocean—I drove back to the Hacienda for more of Herr Hoelli's superb cuisine. Then down to Armado to visit a friend, Laurinda Middleton, who's just started taking in guests at her ranch in wild and beautiful country fifty minutes south of Tucson. On the way I dropped in on the retirement community of Eden Valley to see a display by the "Aquabelles," an over-sixty swimming club that performs a free underwater ballet every Sunday. Sadly, due to an "incident" earlier that week, the show had been canceled.

An afternoon spent riding the trails up behind the Middleton Ranch in the Santa Rita mountains brought back memories of the Lazy Shamrock, and it was with a twinge of regret that I gave up my horse to cross the border into Mexico by car, staying only long enough to buy a bottle of green-label tequila and, tempting fate, a couple of chili relenos to go.

In Patagonia—the other side of the Santa Ritas—keeping an eye out for any suspiciously intrepid-looking hombres, I drifted eastward across the high plains, then turned south through Apache horse country toward Tombstone. Safely back on the tourist beat, I watched a "historama" of the shootout at the OK Corral, drank a sarsaparilla at the Crystal Palace saloon, and collected a few pithy epitaphs from the graves on Boot Hill, before leaving the "town too tough to die" by sundown.

Long hot drive into New Mexico. A plague of butterflies came out of the desert, *(Continued on page 70)*



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San José de Gracia, New Mexico

(Continued from page 68) zapping the midsize and leaving bright yellow smears on the windshield the color of a flower that grew by the roadside. When the engine began overheating, I stopped the car and found the radiator grille completely feathered over with iridescent wings. The slaughter continued until I reached White Sands Missile Range, where nothing much grows or flies (apart from Pershing Cruises) and wavelike dunes of snowy gypsum stretch away across the floor of the Tularosa Basin into the "forbidden zone." A request to visit "Trinity," the site of the first atomic explosion on July 16, 1945, was turned down by the authorities in Alamagordo with a curt "not open to the public."

On to Carlsbad Caverns, eighth wonder of the world and a monument to natural bad taste, where visitors are made welcome and the entire population of New Mexico will be admitted free in the event of a nuclear war. The caves, of course, were used by the Guadeloupe Indians as a place of refuge over a thousand years ago and still provide shelter for millions of migrating guano bats, so the idea is hardly new. Down below in the "Big Room," which my listening device tells me will hold fourteen Astrodomes, I stand with my tour group gazing up at the grotesque rock formations and decide that hanging on down here after the rest of the world has come to an end is strictly for the bats.

Returning by express elevator to the surface, I set off again through the Land of Enchantment—New Mexico's rather coy sobriquet—under reassuringly clear blue skies. En route for Santa Fe I stopped to have lunch with the painter Henriette Wyeth at the San Patricio ranch, where she and her husband Peter Hurd have lived and

'orked since the early thirties. A truly nchanted place—white adobe buildngs with faded Spanish-blue woodork and red-tiled roofs sloping in on a rassy courtyard—it has the charm of n old-world Bohemian enclave, but ith an air of hard-won acceptance, of urposeful tranquility drawn from the ndscape and history of its singular loale. A few miles down the road I lowed to look up at the bullet holes in he upper window of the Lincoln ounty courthouse, where Billy the id shot two men and escaped from il only fifty years before the Hurds ame here to paint.

In Santa Fe the art colonists, more ecently arrived, came to conquer, creting a specious cultural milieu that has aunched ten thousand curio shops, alleries, boutiques, and condos in the ills—all tricked out in ersatz adobe. verywhere you look there's a sign that ays "Magic at Work," and standing nder it someone trying to sell turuoise or tickets to the opera. I didn't tay long in "The City Different." Feelng the effects of the altitude, I had to orce myself to do the heritage, slogging around the cathedral, the "oldest ouse in America," Palace of the Govrnors, and a few dead-at-heart Indian nuseums. After reading Paul Horgan nd Willa Cather I'd come hoping to liscover the heroic Santa Fe of Archbishop Lamy, but it remained elusive.

The morning I left, I found the motel clerk sitting in front of a little black box bombarding himself with negative ions. When I suggested that at seven thouand feet above sea level an ionizer was ort of redundant, he said, "That's what his place is all about, man—overkill."

In a remote valley of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains I got out of the car to photograph a disused *morada,* or chapter house of the Penitentes, a pious flagellant sect that has existed in the villages of northern New Mexico since the earliest years of Spanish conquest. The plain windowless building, its roof beams stained with the blood of past scourgings, was as refreshingly dark and cool inside as a wine cellar. In the next village, where the Penitentes are known to be active still, I felt less comfortable about taking pictures. But as I kneIt in the paintfully sharp gravel of the San José de Gracia cemetery, searching for a telling camera angle, I became *(Continued on page 72)*

SANDEMAN

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Fine Port is one of the world's truly great wines. Make friends with it. Sandeman Founders Reserve Port.



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(Continued from page 71) aware of a couple of fellow tourists I'd seen around Santa Fe stalking me from behind. Under the impression that I was on my knees doing penance, they finally got up the courage to ask in fractured Spanish if I would mind posing for a snapshot.

At dawn on the bridge over the Rio Grande gorge I stood and watched the sun come up behind the sacred mountain of the Taos pueblo. A scent of piñon fires hung in the cool morning air, and it was possible to see what D.H. Lawrence meant by the "greatness of beauty" he found here in a landscape so overwhelming it "changed him forever."

The ranch where the Lawrences lived is off limits. Nearby, in a grove of stunted piñon trees, a concrete bunker erected by Frieda serves as a shrine to her husband's memory. Inside there's a paganish altar with a phoenix motif, a vaseful of old plastic flowers, and a musty smell left by coyotes. Frieda is buried in front of the bunker and Lawrence, the story goes, is actually part of the altar slab. An attempt by Dorothy Brett to steal his ashes—she felt that D.H.L. would have hated the shrine—prompted Frieda to have them mixed in with the concrete. The rumor persists, however, that Brett managed to substitute piñon ashes for Lawrence's, and scatter the real Lorenzo all over hi beloved New Mexico.



One of the many somewhat disused wedding chapels in Las Vegas.

Since it was "discovered" by Mabe Dodge Luhan in 1917, Taos has had it share of cultural invasions. Unlike San ta Fe it seems to have come through them relatively unscathed. In the pueb lo, despite the daily flood of visitor and encroaching hot-tub world of ten nis camps and ski lodges, there remain "a sense of the inalterable," as Law rence put it, "in the slow dark weavin of the Indian life going on still."

The same holds true for much of th Southwest, as if a conspiracy of perma nence exists between the Indians an the land simply to outlast whatever th uninvited guests of history—from con quistadors to camera-slung tourists—may inflict upon them. As I set of across the "big sky" country of the Na vaho, joining a convoy of snowbird bound for the Canyon de Chelly—th last "must" of my tour—I had the un easy feeling that before too long I'd b asking myself back. □

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Anso IV



STEPHEN KELLMEN

MAKE WAY FOR THE MAESTRO

Extraordinary food, yes. But what really catalyzes the elusive chemistry of a memorable evening?

By Naomi Barry

Because Jean Louis was cooking so sublimely that night, we met Slava.

No meal is memorable by virtue of plate alone. Jean Louis had created a feast for body and soul. He was the magician using us as the instrument on which to play his bedazzlements. As the evening crescendoed, the room became a little chamber of happiness. In the general euphoria, it seemed quite natural for strangers to meet. Jean Louis Palladin, a two-star chef of France but quiet about it, arrived in Washington four years ago to open a restaurant in the basement of the Watergate in what had been the old Democratic Club.

Not long ago we were enchanted by a ridiculous remark made by a producer about set designer Robert Mitchell. "Gee, I always knew Bob was good but I didn't know he was Major."

"Good or Major." It is our new litmus-paper test. Jean Louis is Major. His food compels. I defy even a philistine to fork a morsel without first stopping short.

Four of us went to dinner in the low-ceilinged amber-lit restaurant hoping it would be good because we knew the check would be Major. Jean Louis outflew our expectations with a farandole of excitement . . . visual, aromatic, tip-of-the-tongue.

On the sixteenth titillation, which was the first of the desserts, Donna raised her glass to the man at the next table.

Rostropovich spun his chair around so that he was part of our table as well as his own where Galina sat Diva and beautiful.

As if on cue, Jean Louis stepped forth from his kitchen. Tall, dark, gaunt, intense, with black horn-rimmed glasses, he was wearing impeccable navy jeans, brown tasseled moccasins, the traditional white buttoned chef's jacket. A shock. A dedicated young worker-priest, a scientist? A startling resemblance to Picasso's portrait of his secretary Jaime Sabartés. Jean Louis was born in southwest France of a Spanish mother and an Italian father, which is like having the whole mystique of the ancient Mediterranean world in your veins.

Artist to artist, Slava leapt from his chair to wrap him in an exuberant bear hug.

"Maestro, tonight it was Mozart!"

Musicians are notorious for their ability to eat *(Continued on page 80)*

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(Continued from page 78) with gusto and never miss a grace note of a cook's performance. To relive the dinner, we burbled the litany of marvels but Rostropovich had detected every nuance of flavor and committed them to memory.

"Maestro, the masterpiece was the consommé with the truffled chicken quenelles and the slices of truffle on top," extolled Slava. "Those *batonnets* of carrot and turnip. The sureness of a needle of spring onion. A score of Ravel. A harmony of substance. Phenomenal. Vibrato!"

Galina Vishnevskaya, the soprano who was the darling of all Russia from her youthful debut, had dressed for Jean Louis's virtuosity in a dark printed chiffon gown that bared her splendid shoulders.

"This is a special night for Galina and me," said Slava. "No concert. Tomorrow I play in Philadelphia. My daughter will accompany me on the piano. I am a happy man. The next day I fly Concorde to Paris for one concert. The next day I go to London for five concerts. But tonight we have one night without obligation. I say to Galina, 'Put on your prettiest dress. We go to celebrate.' "

The Russian-born cellist and conductor paused before emphasizing, "There is no place in this city we can celebrate so we come here. It is very important in this young country that you have such a place.

"Ninety years ago Tchaikovsky opened Carnegie Hall. Then came Heifetz, Zimbalist, Horowitz, Koussevitzky. They brought Slavic soul to this country. Now you have this kind of soul too."

Four years ago Washington did not know what to make of Jean Louis. He did not impose but gave them what they wanted, or thought they wanted. "Then little by little on the side," confessed Jean Louis, "after they had begun to trust me, I gave them what amused me. First you have to be humble."

"When you go to a concert, you must work," said Slava. "You must listen with all your strength and attention. Here too, you must give attention. It is a symphony of tastes and timbre."

In the felicity of well-being, I proffered names of those we might know in common.

"Resnik?"

"In Paris, I conduct her in Tchaikovsky's 'Queen of Spades.' Never has there been such a Queen of Spades." We drank a glass of champagne to Regina.

"Pierre Vidoudez?"

We toast Vidoudez, the 'luthier' in Geneva to whom the world's most noted musicians bring their beloved Stradivari and other noble instruments to restore their voices.

"Have you read 'Mademoiselle, Entretiens avec Nadia Boulanger'?"

"Of course, I knew Nadia. Dear Nadia!" We quaff a champagne to the greatness of Nadia Boulanger. Jean Louis's inspired dinner has bonded us into a community of friends.

Did we know a pretty movie actress, Kathleen Turner, inquired Slava. "Early one morning, a friend phones me. I am angry. 'For heaven sakes, give me one more hour to sleep.' 'No,' says my friend. 'It is too tremendous. The *Washington Post* has printed an interview with Kathleen Turner. They ask her, "Who are the most important men in your life?" Your name is the top of the list.'

"I stop being angry. I do not need another hour to sleep. I send a hundred roses and a small letter. 'Dear Kathleen, I invite you to dinner. From your Musical Brother.'

"But I am careful. Before I send the letter, I tell Galina. 'Who are the other four men?' she asks."

Galina, who had been sitting quietly at her table, now burst forth in passion. "I spit in her eyes. I know who is this Rostropovich, what he is. But the other four men . . . bah!"

Slava, visibly pleased to be publicly rated so high by Galina, wants us to know that for him the great star is Vishnevskaya. He tells us that for three years in secret he prepared a house in upstate New York as a present for Galina to celebrate her thirty years as a concert artist.

"I do everything and she knows nothing. One day my friend Habsburg at Christie's in Geneva calls me. He is excited. There is something I must buy. It is a crystal goblet, very big, and all engraved. On one side is the coat of arms of the czarina.

"Before I bring Galina to the house for the first time, I ask her to give me a promise. 'Tonight will you drink a half glass of champagne with me? Just the two of us.' She promises.

"When Galina sees the house, it is so beautiful, she cries. I unwrap the box

textiles
#JACK



and take out the goblet. I have a big bottle of champagne, 1952 for the thirty years. . . . What do you call the big bottle, Jean-Louis? Yes, a magnum. I pour in the magnum. I pour and pour. It fills just half the goblet. It is the color of honey.

" 'Extraordinary,' said Galina, eyes luminous. 'Thirty years of a career in half a glass of champagne.' "

Slava tore a page from a notebook and wrote down for me the address of their Paris apartment . . . a continuing link with the magic meal.

You cannot eat the words but I can recount what was served the Couple Rostropovich on the night of "No Obligation."

Jean Louis had pulled out all the stops in his repertory plus a few surprises he had found in the market. The orchestration of the entire meal was his.

As a welcome Hello, he presented teacup-size saucers of New England bay scallops, a scatter of six baroque pearls on each. They had been sautéed in butter without the overreach of another flavor, which might have cancelled out their delicacy. To dissolve the pearls, a bottle of Brut Champagne. On a side plate was a single golden slice of brioche, feather light.

The Rostropovich program formally began with the chicken consommé that had elicited Slava's hosanna.

It was followed by a tour de force of pasta, the result of six months trial-and-error research. Layers of plain egg noodles, spinach noodles, and tomato noodles had been sandwiched with alternating layers of sliced black truffle and mousse of duck liver. If you can picture a Dobostorte with forty layers instead of the traditional seven, adding up to a ribboned terrine but seven centimeters high, you will have an approximation of this "amusement," which demands a jeweler's precision to compose. The slice on each plate was wreathed by a fresh tomato *coulis*.

The third course, another hark back to his father from the Veneto, was a ravioli spectacular. For each portion Jean Louis had fashioned four half-moon pillows of pasta—tomato, spinach, and two plain. The raviolis were stuffed with lobster mousseline and doused with melted tomato butter touched with a kiss of fresh basil.

The next conceit was the royal marriage of lobster *(Continued on page 82)*



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(Continued from page 81) and caviar. Pressed caviar had ennobled a sauce that was nothing more than drawn butter lengthened with a little bit of consommé but uncrushed grains of sevruga had been generously sprinkled over the whole.

Round Five was a squab per person in a garlic sauce. The garlic had been gen tled by a half hour's boiling in acidulated water to rid it of aggression. The pigeon were accompanied by individual sweet garlic flans.

The dessert finale was a full chorus. There were ovals of apricot ice cream and passion-fruit sherbert, bordered with poached apricots and set upon a ginger *coulis*. There was an oblong o puff paste, a third of the thickness of th

> Donna raised her glass to the man at the next table. Rostropovich spun his chair around so that he was part of our table as well as his own where Galina sat Diva and beautiful. As if on cue Jean Louis stepped forth

French cookie known as a *palmier*, topped with lime cream and segments of juicy blood oranges, and pleasure domed with strands of spun sugar.

How can you have coffee without a few *mignardises*? A black chocolate truffle, a white chocolate truffle, a raisin wafer, a *tuile aux amandes*, which challenged lace.

For Jean Louis's concertos of gourmandise come the artists of the nearby Kennedy Center . . . Placido Domingo, Leonard Bernstein, Andrés Segovia, the Rostropoviches.

"Musicians and cooks have one thing in common," said Jean Louis. "First you must have the classical base. Then you can play adaptations."□



lowers have always been an inspiration to Sherle Wagner. Now, this bathroom botanist has transplanted the poppy, capturing the harm of its silhouette and the lacquer-red of its color. Found in art dating a thousand years ack, this lovely flower makes a mockery of the hardy perennial. And our Mr. Wagner ollinates it again, not only on this bowl, but on wall tiles and accessories as well.

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ATOMIC ANTIQUES

Once scorned by purists, the hottest new collecting rage is the design of the forties and fifties

By Pilar Viladas



At Fifty-50 in New York, Charles Eames's well-known 1946 calico ash folding screen and 1950 "Surfboard Table" keep company with Eero Saarinen's "Grasshopper Chair" of 1948.

Those who are waiting for the postwar revival in design to disappear had better not hold their breath, for the period has caught the attention of the serious collector. But before there is muttering about pink flamingo lamps and jewel-tone spun-aluminum patio tumblers, it must be remembered that nostalgia has two sides. Popular interest in a given period of the past invariably dredges up vast quantities of kitsch, but it also brings to light long-buried treasures, forcing us to reexamine the aesthetic judgments we once accepted as gospel. With the fifties craze now in full swing, bad taste may appear to be making a triumphant comeback. In fact, the fifteen years between the close of World War II and the advent of the sixties saw one of the greatest developments in twentieth-century design: the long-awaited marriage of art and industry in the design and production of furniture and objects for the home and office. In addition to being sought by collectors, these pieces are the focus of an ever-increasing number of books and articles. And, to add the institutional stamp of credibility to the era, a major exhibition, "Design Since 1945," at the Philadelphia Museum of Art (from October 16–January 8, 1984) will display over four hundred examples of furniture, lighting, textiles, appliances, and household items. The period immediately following the war was one of tremendous growth in the United States. An unprecedented demand for inexpensive and well-designed housing was created by a new generation of "young moderns" and their Baby Boom offspring. Architect Marcel Breuer's exhibition house, meant to be a low-cost housing prototype, was seen by thousands of people in The Museum of Modern Art's sculpture garden in 1949, and in California, John Entenza's pioneering Case Study program produced houses by some of the West Coast's most innovative architects. An equally high demand for consumer goods generated a need for design—and designers. It was at this time that the concept of Good Design emerged. It was meant to represent the ideal of a way of life that was efficient, healthy, and rational, right down to the water glasses. The word was spread at home by programs such as The Museum of Modern Art's Good Design shows, held from 1950–55, which presented objects chosen by the museum for their innovative design solutions, and by traveling exhibitions of products from Europe. The United States government, with almost evangelical zeal, sent design teams to the Far East and South America, and brought groups of Germans and Japanese to tour American factories and schools. This attitude toward design had its roots in the German Bauhaus of the twenties, but the Bauhaus vision of well-designed, mass-produced goods never became a reality. Like the Bauhaus, Good Design was also a postwar movement with a mission, but the latter had the economic and technological muscle to carry *(Continued on page 86)*

COLORTRAK



TWO THOUSAND

(Continued from page 84) it out with the result that, in the late forties, the U.S. was a world leader in design, a position it eventually lost to Europe in the sixties.

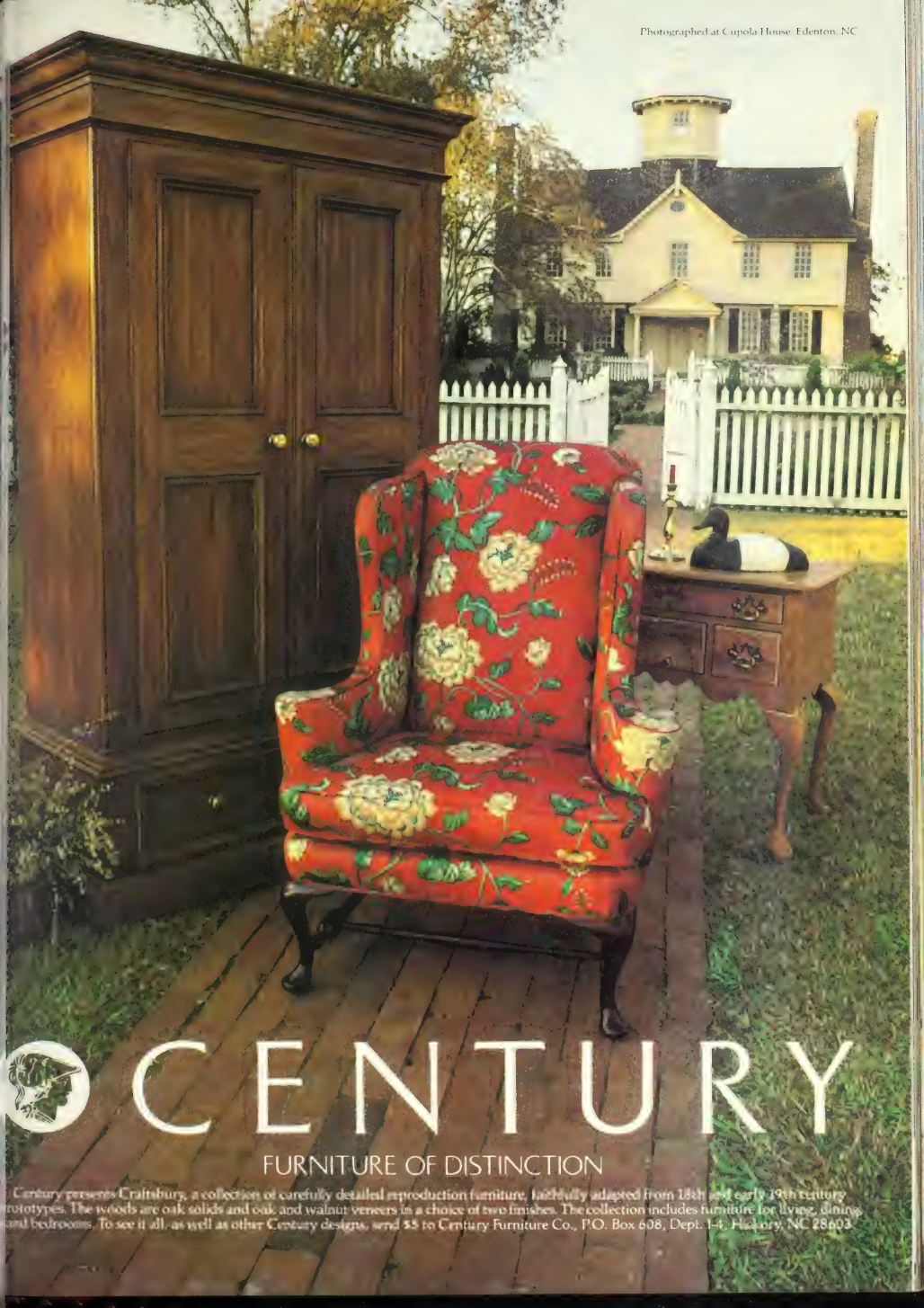
American design icons, many of which appear in the Philadelphia show, range from the prosaic (Tupperware, the polyethylene food storage containers developed by Earl Tupper) to the precious (David Hills's crystal vase for Steuben, with the air bubble trapped in its base), although neither of these, which are still in production, has the period cachet of, say, Russel Wright's dinnerware, which is not. But far and away the most memorable creations of the postwar era are those furniture pieces created by four men whose ideas still shape architecture and furniture design: George Nelson, Charles Eames, Eero Saarinen, and Harry Bertoia. Nelson, an architect and former magazine editor (who continues to write prolifically on design), became design director for Herman Miller, a Michigan-based furniture manufacturer, in the mid-forties, and was largely responsible for putting the company on the international design map. While Nelson himself designed innovative furniture for Miller (a now highly prized desk with a perforated metal filing cabinet, the whimsical "marshmallow" sofa, and a modular storage wall, to name a few), he is perhaps best known for bringing Miller and Charles Eames together. Eames was an architect and designer who had taught at Cranbrook Academy of Art and who, with architect Eero Saarinen (son of Cranbrook's president, Finnish architect Eliel Saarinen), won an award in The Museum of Modern Art's 1940 Organic Design competition for a chair made of molded plywood. While that design was never put into production, a later version, developed by Eames and his wife Ray during their work for the Navy on a lightweight molded-wood splint, made design history. Having finally found the appropriate production technology, Eames was able to design a line of plywood chairs that Herman Miller manufactured, followed by a line of world-famous fiberglass seating. The early examples of both lines, according to Ralph Cutler of New York's Fifty-50 gallery, are becoming increasingly valuable, especially the plywood "low" chairs and the early fiberglass chairs, which were essentially hand-finished. Other prized Eames pieces include his famous folding plywood screen of 1946 (Fifty-50 partner Mark McDonald calls this "the ultimate expression of laminated plywood"), a storage system of stock steel members with plywood storage components, his luxurious rosewood and leather lounge chair and ottoman of 1956, which are still in production, and the whimsical "surfboard" coffee table of 1950. Nelson also brought sculptor Isamu Noguchi to work at Miller on a now-rare (but widely copied) wood-and-glass coffee table and a series of wire-base tables. Saarinen and Bertoia (a Cranbrook-educated sculptor and designer) helped to establish Knoll International's reputation in its early years (Florence Knoll was also a Cranbrook graduate). Bertoia's bent-wire chairs, with their sinuous lines and uncompromising silhouettes, remain perennial favorites. Saarinen's Womb chair of 1948 is another Knoll icon, as are his molded fiberglass and plastic Tulip chair and table of 1955—designed to "clean up the slum of legs," and "make the chair all one thing again."

With its emphasis on wood furniture and organic, biomorphic forms, Scandinavian design was another important influence in the postwar era. Finnish architect Alvar Aalto's fluid, bent-ply birch furniture was designed during the thirties, but it did not appear in large quantities until the fifties; and Hans Wegner's Peacock chair, a modern descendant of the Windsor chair, and Arne Jacobsen's Egg and Swan chairs are among the Scandinavian classics.

In England, designers such as Robin Day and Ernest Race were applying modern design theories to mass-production methods and materials, and the establishment of the Design Council in England created a world model for government promotion of good design. In France, designers such as Pierre Paulin and in Italy Franco Albini, Gio Ponti, and Marco Zanuso added their own stylistic quirks to the international mix; and Carlo Mollino's expressionistic designs of riveted, molded plywood have been mentioned by several New York furniture dealers as among the most desirable, and difficult to find, European pieces.

Nostalgia aside, what is it that makes postwar design so collectible in 1983? For one thing, it is fairly accessible. According to New York dealer William Weber, the prohibitive cost and scarcity of Art Deco is one of the main reasons for the fifties fever. Moreover, since many of the designs of the period are still in production, it is only the very early versions of a piece, or an out-of-production model, such as the Eames screen, that can command a high price. And price is no object. Los Angeles dealer Virginia Jack of Virginia's noted that though it is particularly easy to sell these designer pieces it is becoming more difficult to find them. But there is a developing group of young collectors, Weber feels, "and the serious market is still growing."

The question remains, however: How good is most of it? Thirty years' perspective has made the kitsch look kitschier, and the classics more classic. But the fine distinctions are not so easy to make. Much of the work of the period now seems slightly dotty, overly futuristic and romantic in its forms, and striving for an image rather than a solution. But without rushing into the quicksand issue of style, there are certain pieces that are still going strong after three decades: Saarinen's and Bertoia's chairs, Aalto's furniture and accessories, and of course Eames's chairs. His Aluminum Group office chairs still rate as some of the most beautiful, functional, and comfortable seating to be found anywhere. Similarly, Arne Jacobsen's Ant stacking molded plywood chair of 1952 looks shockingly modern, and supremely poised. In short, the designs that still make our hearts beat faster are those whose forms sprang from economical and elegant solutions to problems of new materials and technologies—which was, after all, the promise of the postwar era. □


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ATOMIC ANTIQUES, ANOTHER VIEW

If you wait long enough, everything comes back. But do you want to be there?

By Alexander Cockburn



The fifties inside and out in the Mar Vista section of Los Angeles: the 1957 Chevy Bel Air convertible is perhaps the most desirable item in this picture.

The fifties was a bad decade to come home drunk in, and before the enthusiasm for that decade's artifacts picks up much more steam, I think we should remember this. Tottering through the front door, the reveler would trip, first of all, over a large, woolly rug. Then, after a lunge into the conversation pit, he would take a tremendous toss over the biomorphic ottoman. Staggering badly now but still game, the man of the house would sideswipe a couple of Bertoia chairs and plough through a knee-high thicket of kidney-shaped tables before trying to collapse into a Saarinen tulip chair from Knoll. He'd miscalculate the center of gravity, of course, and go down for the count, taking a school of hundredweight glass ashtrays and ceramic lampstands with him.

Gray with stubble and guilt in the early dawn, he'd awake and try to remember: where was he? Had he thrown up on the carpet, or was that the way the carpet looked anyway? Had he done that to the wall, or had the kids? Had Jackson Pollock? He'd lurch to the kitchen to sink his throbbing head in his hands on the kitchen table. No table. Just a chest-high Formica counter with tall, dangerous stools along it.

I grew up in a Georgian house in southern Ireland, properly equipped for the reception of revelers. Vast Edwardian club sofas offered succor; capacious Victorian armchairs carried one effortlessly from postprandial reverie to soothing slumber. Anglo-Irish furniture looks after its own.

The Festival of Britain, in 1951, was my first look at anything much later in concept than the mir rored Deco glories o my mother's dressing table. But shortly afte this, we rented a house in Hampstead, north London, from a for ward-looking architect and this was when my dear father discovered that for all the period's enthusiasm for liquor fifties drinking and fif ties interior design did not really mix, any more than did British weather and the outdoor American-style barbecues that were also all the rage among forward-looking people at that time. (Eating outside, for the British means wet lettuce sandwiches. Barbecues always baffled them, but that's another story.) It poured too much for us to do barbecuing on the terrace of that Hampstead house, so we had ample time to sit inside in the lounge, den, or downstairs Polynesian-style bar, one of the great fifties spinoffs from Thor Heyerdahl's *Kon Tiki,* which did for mai-tais what Rachel Carson did for DDT. Saarinen said famously, apropos his Tulip chair, that he wanted "to clean up the slum of legs and make the chair all one thing again." Fine *(Continued on page 90)*

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(Continued from page 88) words, but from where we sat in Hampstead, the up-to-date fifties seemed to be not just a slum but a veritable city of chair legs; there were wire chairs, womb chairs, fiberglass chairs, Hardoy chairs, Aalto chairs, all with their legs. There were small chairs, which you fell over, and chaise longues, which moulded you like an "S" passed out on its back. Then there were the tables, triangular, trapezoidal, kidney-like, and as vicious as Dobermans in the zeal with which they sank their glass corners into your shin. When you look back on it, people must have sat down a lot in the fifties in their Aaltos and Eeros, Finlandized enough to suit the gloomiest predictions of John Foster Dulles! And when they were tired of sitting and being Finlandized at home, they went off to their offices, tastefully designed in the modern manner, and sank into a Mies Barcelona chair or Breuer's even more unpleasant Vassily without which no up-to-date corporate suite would be seen dead. In the Bauhaus, they must have had bottoms of stone.

The fifties, after all, was the era when people began to realize that a good deal of life was going to be spent waiting; in corporate suites, in airports, and in front of the TV. Furniture designers rose to the challenge: chairs that committed settee, but only half-heartedly; no matter how you tried, you could never actually go to sleep, just wait in agony for the corporate vice-president or the evening plane to turn up. If you want to study more closely what I mean, contrast the seating arrangements in Los Angeles International Airport with those in L.A.'s Union Station, built just before the Second World War.

When we had roosted in Hampstead long enough, tripped over a sufficiency of little wire chairs, had our fill of dirty pinks and bilious greens, and noted the curious tendency of furniture and design silhouettes to duplicate ectoplasm or the atomic/electron pattern, we returned to southern Ireland. The fifties in Ireland did not have much to do with Mr. Reddy Kilowatt or the Peaceful Atom. In our case, it had to do with lamplight and a horse and trap until 1958, when I was able to obtain a driver's license and thus chauffeur our family into *(Continued on page 92)*

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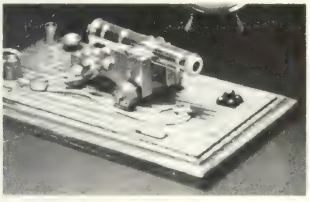
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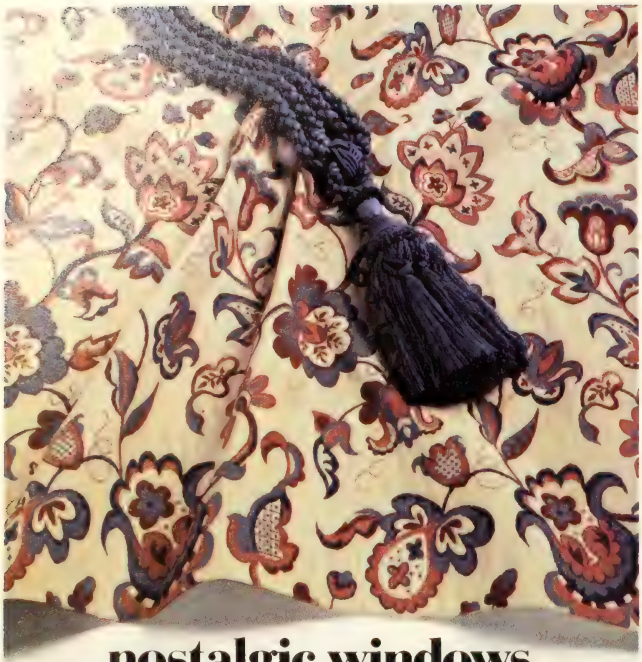
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nostalgic windows,



historic walls,

(Continued from page 90) the twentieth century.

But we kept up with American developments through *The Saturday Evening Post,* to which my father would occasionally sell a short story. In its advertisements, we saw unfolding the greatest consumer spending boom—from toasters to dishwashers to TVs to cars—in the history of the world, and in its fictions the stimulating but strange life of the postwar American suburb, filling its newly produced homes with new massed-produced versions of the fifties style. Not maybe an Eames screen, a Noguchi coffee table, and Cherner chairs, but versions of

> There's an unease, a tension, but also a complacency in a lot of fifties design and color that always leaves me unrelaxed

same in a delirious though temporary rejection of the safe Connecticut Colonial Revival.

I have never felt the slightest nostalgia for the fifties—a blighted decade, politically repugnant and an epitaph to stunted human aspirations. But since it looks as though the eighties are turning out much the same way, it is scarcely surprising that Hollywood, as well as the White House, has caught on to the fact that the fifties is in, and that a handful of antiques stores in New York, Los Angeles, and London have been hunting out the real achievements, and that, on a lower level, fifties kitsch is following on naturally from cheap Deco and Streamline.

No harm in that. Anyone who wants to go nosing around for chairs, glassware, lamps, and so forth can have a pleasant enough time. The stuff is beginning to turn up in auctions, though most of it was mass-produced in sufficiently large quantities to keep the prices down. All the way across the United States, after all, there are per-

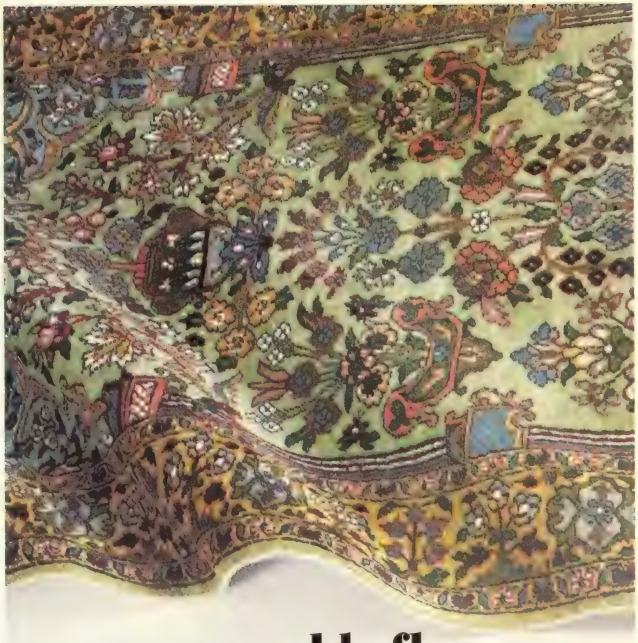
ectly preserved fifties interiors, like nammoths in a Russian glacier, unhanged over the decades.

I don't grudge the collectors their un, and I wouldn't mind an Eames creen myself. Not much else though. There's an unease, a tension, but also a omplacency in a lot of fifties design nd color that always leaves me unreaxed. The lines of Art Nouveau, Deco, nd Streamline were assured—emblems of a world that might be cruel as vell as kind, but which still made ense.

Not so in the fifties, where even the amous Abstract Expressionism eemed to be advertising, with disquit, its "freedom" in contrast to comnunist realism. Colors, décor, and lomestic design encapsulated a way of ife and a credo of family and relationhips that disintegrated a decade later. The nervousness and bad faith are here to be seen in much of the fifties lesign.

This is not true, I may say, in the one rea where I would be happy—am appy—to collect: the great glory of American design in the fifties—not chairs, but cars. A culture that produced the Loewy Studebaker coupes of the early fifties, Frank Hershey's '55 T-bird, Harley Earl's '55 Chevy Bel Air, and Virgil Exner's '57 Chrysler 300-C convertible was a culture that had nothing to be ashamed of. Every one of those cars, and many more besides, should be in The Museum of Modern Art or The American Wing of The Metropolitan Museum. This was the American psyche at full, confident stretch.

Subscribe to *Hemmings Motor News* and collect yourself a true artwork of the fifties for a few thousand or even a few hundred dollars. America was truly Finlandized not by Saarinen or Aalto but by the high baroque of the Exner Chrysler tailfins of '57, culminating in the greatest triumph of American design in the Eisenhower years: the titanically finned Cadillac Eldorado Biarritz convertible of 1959, created under the supervision of GM's artistic director Harley Earl: 1,320 came off the production line, each costing $7,401 in '59 dollars, and one of them, someday, will be mine. They didn't sell them in southern Ireland at the time. □



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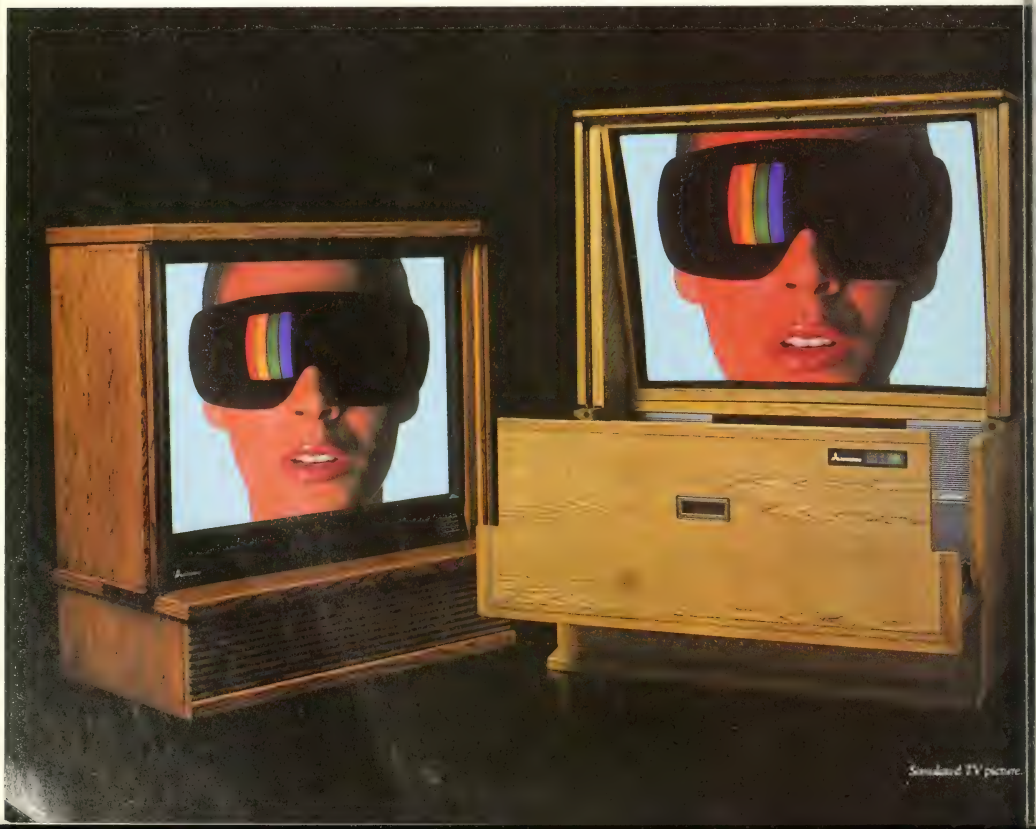
Very often, claims like brightest, or sharpest are passed off as just so much more advertising puffery.

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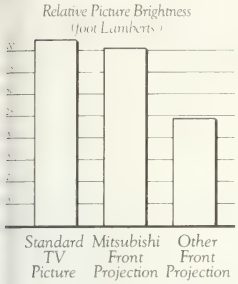
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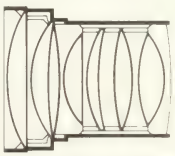
What makes it worth both the money and the trip is, finally, big-screen television (over four feet measured diagonally) with the brightness and overall picture quality you're accustomed to seeing on a 25-inch screen.



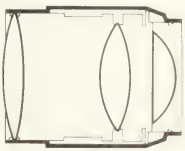
And equally impressive as the picture on the screen is the Mitsubishi technology behind it.

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In a city where almost everyone is a collector, one man is exceptional. His Manhattan apartment, in a distinguished building overlooking the East River, contains not one but several collections, results of what a friend describes as "an enormous meandering interest" and, the friend might well have added, an enormous energy.

With an apparent nonchalance that seems to belong to an earlier age, this congenial collector has assembled vintage photographs, eighteenth-century English furniture, contemporary American art, fifties glass, Indian relics, and an assortment of objects with lions' heads on them in commemoration of his birth sign in a home where visitors and objects flow from room to room as naturally as the river outside flows to the sea and where, somehow, there always seems to be room for one more.

What keeps this informality from becoming disorder are interior designer Mark Hampton's restrained arrangements of color and form and the simple and precise spaces devised by architectural designer Mark Kaminski out of what was once a maze of bedrooms, sitting rooms, and narrow, sunless corridors. Surprisingly, it was Mr. Kaminski's first large project and the first time he and Mr. Hampton had worked together. The outcome of their partnership is a setting in which the benign ghost of Palladio might well feel at home.

Preceding pages: The English side chair, one of six distributed throughout the apartment, has leather upholstery in the same orange as the inlay work on the rail. A newly acquired picture rests on the Godwin armchair until an appropriate place is found for it. *Left:* Robert Wilson's pipe-frame dining chairs might seem forbidding but for the glint on each one of a gold griffin's foot. Surprisingly comfortable, they slide obediently under the zinc-topped table when not in use, unlike the magisterial master chair, which can't be pushed around.







According to that sixteenth-century architect, to be natural is to be rational in structure and practical in design. Using rich materials in a casual way and through painstaking attention to detail, Mark Kaminski's solutions fit that definition. Having organized what he terms a "flow of activities," he chose as the basis of his floor plan one of the simplest and most traditional arrangements of all, the enfilade, where one room opens directly on to another without the intervention of a corridor between them. Such an arrangement allows the visitor to pass through the apartment in an elongated circle, from the gallery through the sitting room, into the dining room, on to the library, and out again into the gallery, discreetly by-passing the master bedroom and bathroom at one end of the apartment. The gallery, which is one of the apartment's "public spaces" linking the other spaces in the apartment, is paved with marble, "like a sidewalk," as Mr. Kaminski puts it. In the sitting room and dining room, heating and air-conditioning units in each window well are covered in the same Wallen gray marble. To open up the view from the apartment as much as possible, one bricked-up window in the sitting room was restored, another window added, and all the windows there and in the dining room were fitted with the narrowest possible black metal pivoting frames that 'disappear' as you look through them. The height of *(Text continued on page 216)*

Preceding pages: Characteristically, the collector bought the Duncan Phyfe–style sofa at a time when it had to go into storage, because he liked it and would "find a place for it one day." The table is an early-nineteenth-century papier mâché tray from England on legs made to his instructions. *Above:* One of a pair of stolid, early-eighteenth-century hall chairs by English maker William Kent and a pared-down LeWitt construction express opposing ideas about form. Between them, historically, is the late-nineteenth-century American settee just visible on the right. *Right:* A highly congenial but probably temporary arrangement: a Nepalese dance mask and a Thai head share space on the sitting room's center table with an eighteenth-century Indian perfume box, a fossilized shell engraved and used by Indian priests to call worshippers to service, and a Borneo straw basket so delicately woven that it looks and feels like cloth.











Preceding pages: The settee, in a style known as American Eastlake, is one of the few American pieces in the apartment. The black marble fireplace was bought long before it could be installed. "It became a kind of anchor," says the owner. *These pages:* A recent Gary Stephan painting shares the sitting room with furniture from four continents and three centuries. The vast Adam carpet was one of the last pieces to be bought for the apartment.



REDESIGNING HISTORY

The eccentric architect Emilio Terry was the father of the *faux* Style Louis the Seventeenth

BY CHRISTOPHER HEMPHILL
PHOTOGRAPHS BY HENRY CLARKE

An architect who is also a dreamer and a poet, tired of his own petty era and of its demands, will be tempted to escape—if not from what is possible, then at least from what is real. He will dream of a country, a century, legendary heroes; for them he will create palaces, bridges, gardens, terraces, pavilions and fountains."

Architecture in this century can claim a number of dreamers but very few poets. Emilio Terry, the author of these lines, was both. He was also determinedly eccentric, partially amnesiac, and, some thought, downright dotty. Everything about this strange man of genius seems improbable, but most particularly his vocation. The miracle of his career is that he built anything at all.

A gentleman architect, he dreamed, above all, of the eighteenth century, and saw no need to improve on its principles. His reputation during his lifetime was limited to a largely European elite who valued the erudition and wit with which he enlivened an inherited tradition. Now virtually forgotten—but never more timely—his work ignores the premium that modern architecture has placed on innovation and testifies instead to the persistence of Neoclassicism.

His was a distilled Neoclassicism. Palladio and Ledoux were his "legendary heroes." The latter, often spoken of as the first modern architect, appealed to him more as the last of the "old" architects. In his transmuta-

Opposite: A model of the Ledoux-like pyramid designed for Charles de Beistegui's Chateau de Groussay. The model was built by the artist Alexander Serebriakoff, who also executed watercolors of Groussay. *Above:* Terry's project for a *"Maison Escargot."*







Opposite: Christian Bérard's portrait of Terry. *This page:* On the ground floor of his house, Terry built a library for his collection of architectural books in what had formerly been a café. Its furnishings—late Louis XVI, Directoire, and Consulat—define the style he liked to call "Louis XVII."





Spectacular floors were typical of Terry's work. *Opposite:* Jacob chairs decorate the gallery of a pavilion built outside Paris in the fifties. *This page:* The entrance hall of the Hôtel de Chanaleilles, renovated by Terry during the same decade. Meissen lions flank a niche containing a Rodin.



He prepared more than 250 drawings before arriving at a proportion of cornice to column to capital and a color scheme that finally suited him

tion of nostalgia, both personal and historical, into art, Terry resembles Proust, whom he always regretted never having met. His early circumstances, which were such that he might well have done so, now seem almost unimaginably charmed.

His paternal grandfather, an immensely rich Cuban, moved the family to Paris, where Terry was born on the Avenue du Bois. One day, while motoring through Touraine, his parents saw a "For Sale" sign on Chenonceaux. They bought the chateau the next day as a suitable place to raise their children. When it came time to educate them they sent for the Abbé Mugnier, that most worldly of Jesuits and intimate of Proust, who when asked whether he believed in hell had replied, "Yes, because it's a dogma of the church—but I don't believe there's anyone in it."

Terry's disposition, at once saintly and ironical, must have been influenced by the Abbé's. In his vocation, he was deeply marked by another, quite different Proustian figure, Boni de Castellane of the famous marriage to Anna Gould, the famous Palais Rose, and the famous *mot* after his wife expelled him from the Palais Rose: "She'll never know how much I have appreciated her for her money." He bequeathed to the generation of which Terry was one of the brightest ornaments the taste of the 1890s for a refined and resurgent Neoclassicism; his influence on Terry was more personal, as well. After his sister's marriage to Castellane's brother, Terry moved into the Louis XVI house where Boni, retiring after the Palais Rose, had written his apologia for his newly straitened circumstances, *L'Art d'Etre Pauvre.* At about the same time, Terry acquired Rochecotte, the country house that had descended to the Castellanes from Talleyrand's niece, the Duchesse de Dino. Her uncle's often-quoted remark about the sweetness of life just before the Revolution can never have been far from Terry's mind.

Returning after his death to the Castellane line, Rochecotte was emptied of its contents several years ago. The Paris house, fortunately, was inherited by a favorite nephew who now lives in it exactly as his uncle left it, right down to his favorite slippers next to his favorite chair in the library. The house is a remarkable distillation of personal taste, although Terry's refinement was such that he disliked the very word "taste." In his portrait by

Left: A fanciful drawing from the thirties depicts an imaginary staircase in the clouds. *Opposite:* Terry designed the Greek Room of the Hôtel de Chanaleilles for an extraordinary collection of Attic objects mostly dating from the fifth century B.C.







Opposite: The small octagonal Writing Room of the Hôtel de Chanaleilles contains a *bureau plat*, a Meissen inkwell, an Aubusson rug and Jacob chairs. *This page:* For the gallery Terry designed torchères worthy of a floor that had been a present from Napoleon.

His reputation during his lifetime was limited to a largely European elite who valued the erudition and wit with which he enlivened an inherited tradition

Christian Bérard, which hangs in a rather obscure corridor, he wears the same perfect round glasses that an entire later generation of architects was to adopt in homage to Le Corbusier, although it would be difficult to imagine an architect philosophically and temperamentally more opposed to Terry. His expression, unlike the Swiss sage's, is one of perpetual amusement and geniality.

His irony, most frequently, was directed at himself. His friend Gareth Windsor, who now lives in the *mansarde* of the Paris house, recalls that he invariably referred to his genealogy as *"la descente du cocotier."* (A curious porcelain stove in the shape of a palm tree in the house's dining room was probably chosen to reinforce the Darwinian joke.) Similarly, when speaking of the noble family into which his other sister married, he liked to observe that their name was of two sorts, "the *faux* and the *faux faux*. Happily, mine are only the *faux*."

On this point, Terry was being unnecessarily strict; his kin, although not descended from Charlemagne, were genuine princes of the realm. The joke, however, bespeaks a particularly cyclical view of history, which Terry liked to refer to as a "relay race." He realized that the Neoclassicism that he loved was itself a revival of the "original" Classical revival of the Renaissance. Palladio, in this view, was *faux;* Ledoux was *"faux faux."* Terry once remarked to a startled friend—almost everything he said was startling—that there had been no advance in architecture between Gothic cathedrals and American skyscrapers. This may have been his belief, but in his own work he chose to remember only what had come in between: the period of stylistic variation rather than structural innovation bracketed, roughly speaking, by Palladio and Ledoux. His notorious absent-mindedness must be considered in this light.

As a young man, apparently, he had been struck by a falling roof tile while walking along a *quai*. A new bowler hat prevented him from being killed but his memory, after that, became a highly selective mechanism. Habitually, he would ask his dinner partners at whose house they were dining. Once, having set off for a lunch party in a building on the Avenue Foch where he knew all the tenants, he stopped at the first apartment he came to, where he had not been expected. After recovering from her surprise, the hostess was delighted to set another place for him and relinquished him (*Text continued on page 211*)



Terry was obliged to reconstruct an entire wing of the Hôtel de Chanaleilles in order to accommodate a romantic souvenir of the *ancien régime:* white and gold Régence boiserie from a boudoir in the Paar Palace in Vienna, where Marie Antoinette was betrothed. The furniture is Louis XVI: desk by Riesevier, chairs by Jacob.

Arthur Smith decorates a new apartment for a long-time client

THE PERSISTENCE OF COLOR

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER VITALE





She calls the color "cream of tomato soup" and has chosen it for the walls of her last four living rooms. Arthur E. Smith, decorator for this New York executive, says, "The color works better every time." What is now a seventeen-year history as designer and client—and as friends—began when they were both young "go-fers," he for his mentor and future partner, Billy Baldwin, and she for a Baldwin client, the advertising titan she still works with.

The suite of rooms on the parlor floor of a brick row house was inspiring to Arthur Smith because of the big high spaces and handsome details, the focal fireplaces, and the excellent floors. Smith, equally adept at traditional and contemporary design, is especially interested in creating balance and symmetry—properties these rooms possess even when empty. During their seventeen years of acquaintance, Smith's client has seen her taste broaden. Thus, says Smith, "You can count the centuries here: living room, twentieth; library, nineteenth; bedroom, eighteenth." The occupant of the rooms reports that she uses every inch of space and revels in the stylistic nuances. □ *By Elaine Greene. Produced by Babs Simpson*

Right and *above*: The library has the visual depth that evokes the nineteenth century and is the room guests naturally gravitate to. Small dinners often take place here. *Overleaf*: The former dining room makes a baronial bedroom that is furnished as a third sitting room. Clarence House fabric.









CULTURE HERO

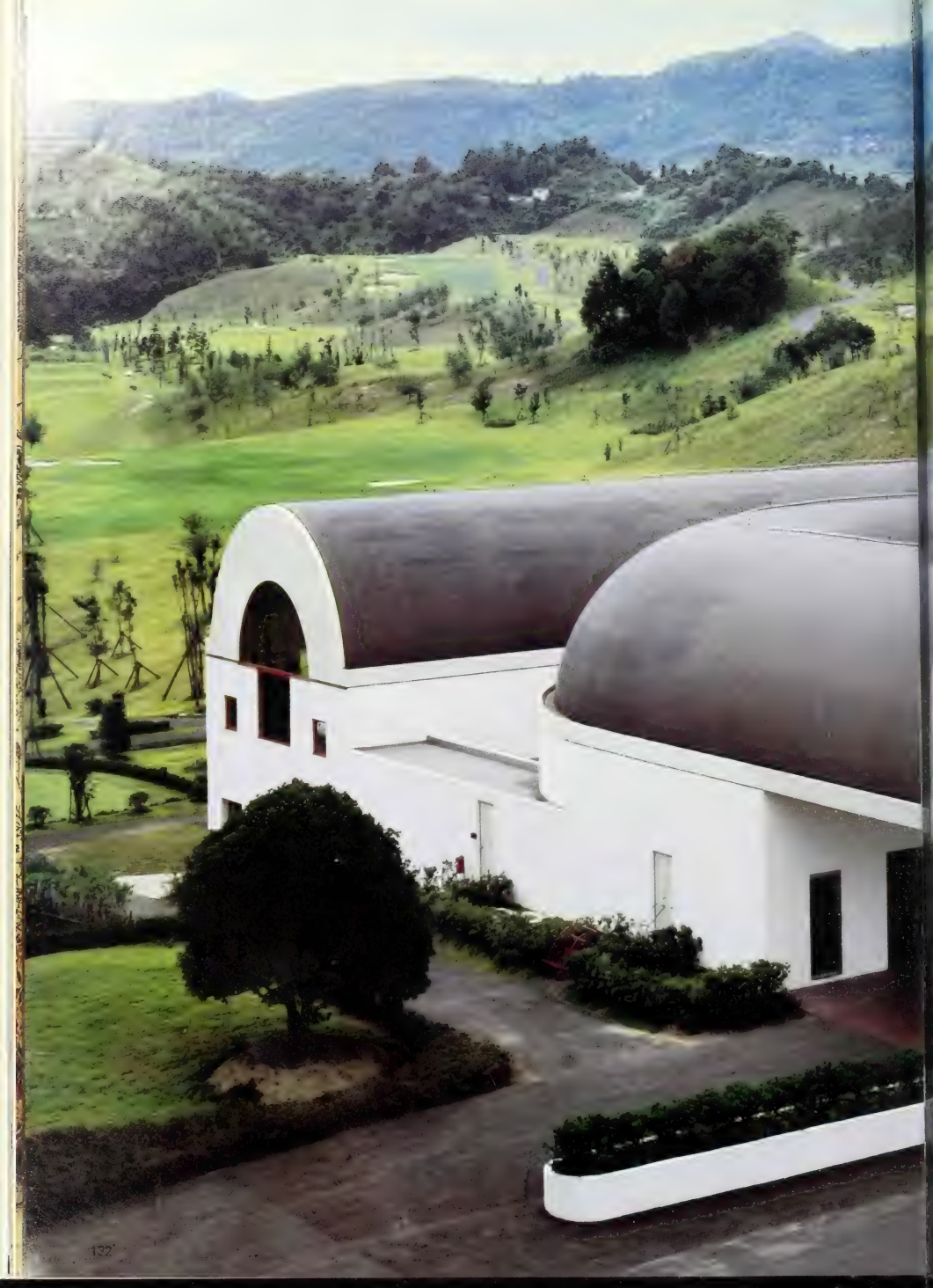
Left: Arata Isozaki in a portrait by Hiro. *Right:* Isozaki's Waseda Sho-Gekijo Toga Sanbo theater in the Japan Alps embodies both the inherent logic of traditional Japanese timber construction and the stylistic simplicity that deeply influenced the development of modern architecture in the West.



THE ART OF ISOZAKI

BY MARTIN FILLER

Japan's most influential architect, Arata Isozaki has charted a convincing new path for the future of world architecture. A skillful melding of technology and tradition, gravity and wit, structure and symbolism, his work is much like the man who created it: handsome, sophisticated, self-assured, and at ease anywhere in the world of art and ideas.



SIGN OF THE TIMES

Isozaki's interest in architecture as metaphor has never been more clearly expressed than in his Fujimi Country Clubhouse in Oita, on Japan's southern island of Kyushu. In the shape of a question mark, it wryly symbolizes the cultural ambiguity of contemporary Japan.



Isozaki's architecture evokes a strong sense of place but is never confined by it



LOS ANGELES MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

AMERICA'S FIRST

Above: Isozaki's first major architectural commission in the U.S. is his design for the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, scheduled for completion in 1986.

JAPAN'S LATEST

Right: His largest project to date, Isozaki's $50-million Civic Center fo the new town of Tsukuba, forty miles northeast of Tokyo, centers on a dramatic sunken plaza.

Modern architecture is not dead: it is alive and well and living in Japan. One of the principal reasons for its vigorous condition there is Arata Isozaki, the 52-year-old Tokyo-based architect whose designs have an originality, confidence, and clarity that few architects at work today can equal. Isozaki has been developing an architectural style that is one of the most convincing and encouraging to emerge on the world scene in recent years: his buildings are a subtle synthesis of age-old symbolism (the preoccupation of the Post Modernists) and up-to-the-minute technology (the obsession of the Modernists). Yet the result is something totally authentic: architecture that does not look back to a nostalgically reinvented past, nor ahead to an idealistically imagined future, but instead intensifies and enriches the present.

For the past decade Isozaki has been a culture hero in his own country and a celebrity on the international architecture circuit, but only now is he beginning to establish a wider reputation in this country. He has his first major American commission, the design of the new Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles; the first New York one-man show of his architectural drawings and silkscreens, at the Rosa Esman Gallery in SoHo from October 22 to November 12; and the first monograph on his work in English, by Philip Drew, published last year by Harper & Row—each an important sign of attainment among architects today. In an exceptionally difficult profession within a highly stratified society, Arata Isozaki has made it to the top. But his place cannot be considered among his countrymen alone: he is one of the few architects anywhere who can justly be called an international artist, and that has to do not just with his considerable talent, but also with the kind of life he leads.

Arata Isozaki seems to be everywhere at once: at the opening of a Japanese fashion retrospective in Los Angeles, in the midst of a jam-packed loft party in New York, rushing to change planes at Charles de Gaulle Airport, enjoying dinner in the best restaurant in Hong Kong. For although he is a major figure in Japan's impressive creative resurgence, Isozaki is keenly aware of the problems imposed by his country's geographic isolation, far from the artistic axis between America and Europe. Thus he and his wife, the sculptor Aiko Miyawaki, have become true cultural citizens of the world, welcome guests everywhere along their vast international network of colleagues and friends.

Not surprisingly, Arata Isozaki's architecture is no less cosmopolitan than its creator, though it bears no resemblance at all to the bland multinational Modernism that is giving an increasing sameness to cities from Singapore to São Paulo. Neither is he particularly interested in the literal revival of regional building styles that some of his colleagues believe to be the answer to the rising tide of uniformity. Rather he is stimulated by a veritable galaxy of sources—the temples and gardens of Kyoto, the Neoclassical villas of Palladio, the visionary fantasies of the French and Russian revolutionary architects, the exquisitely refined designs of Josef Hoffmann, and even the curves of Marilyn Monroe's body.



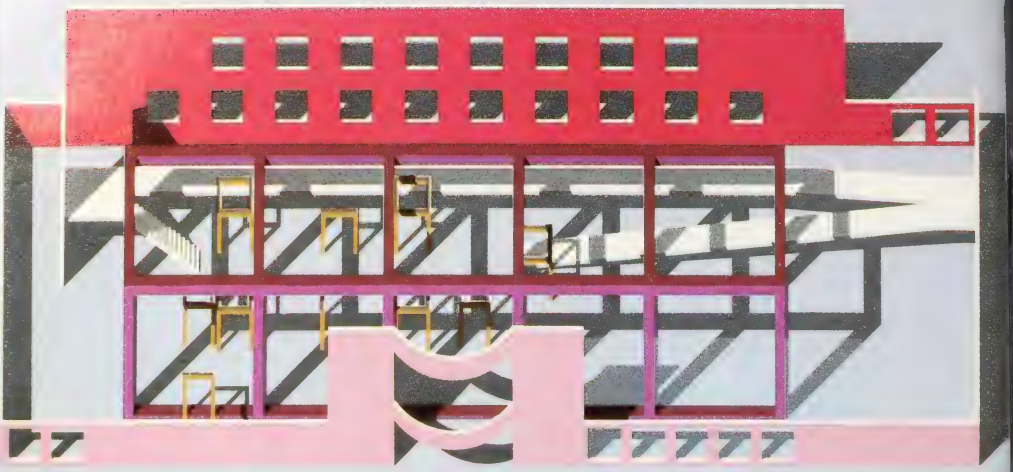




FRAMEWORK FOR ART

Isozaki's best-known building is his Gunma Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts in Takasaki, sixty miles northwest of Tokyo. The architect first conceived it as a cubic sculpture (shown in a silkscreen by Isozaki, *above*), which relates closely to the work of the American artist Sol LeWitt. Clad in a "tunic" of aluminum paneling, the completed structure has had a notable influence on the recent designs of such American architects as Richard Meier.

Isozaki's balance between the poetic and the practical is virtually unparalleled



BRIGHTNESS AT NOON

Below: The vivid red east façade of the Etoh Clinic, an obstetric/gynecological hospital in Kitsuki on Kyushu, screens the efficiently organized interior of this modern hospital facility, *above.*

SERENITY AT SUNSET

Opposite: Two pools at the Etoh Clinic—one for swimming, one for wading—reflect both the setting sun and the influence of the great contemporary Mexican architect Luis Barragán.





k and sensuous, Isozaki's interiors show his love of delicate color and curving lines



OLD BANDING

pposite: Walls of a dining room at e Nippon Electric Glass Company Otsu, near Kyoto, are clad ith striking gray-and-white-striped ystallized-glass panels.

SUBTLE SHADING

Above: Hauserman showroom at the Merchandise Mart in Chicago is given a mysterious richness by Isozaki's masterly ordering of colors, which emphasize pure forms.

loving in circles sensitive to the slightest shifts in prevailing rtistic fashion, it is not easy for an avant-garde architect to void trendy influences as well, but Isozaki has shown re- arkable independence. At a time when many feel that rchitecture should be less sleek he is not afraid of sophisti- ation; at a point in history when monumentality is dis- ained he does not shrink from grandeur; in a period of rchitectural repetitiveness his buildings each have a dis- nctive appearance and individual character.

Isozaki's focused sense of himself and his artistic aims tem from his secure roots. He was born in 1931 in the small ity of Oita on Japan's southern island of Kyushu, the son of prosperous rice shipper who was also an accomplished *hai- u* master and leader of the *Amano-gawa* ("Milky Way") school of poets. The cultivated atmosphere in which he was raised set the stage for his own artistic development. Oldest of four children, he was doted on by his family and was reared in a traditional male-oriented manner that is still discernible in his self-assured Samurai gait, which stops just short of a swagger.

Arata was born late enough to avoid conscription in World War II—he was only fourteen when the Bomb was dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki—and came of age in the years of the American occupation. He showed no particular interest in architecture until he entered the University of Tokyo in 1950 and shortly thereafter began to study under Japan's preeminent postwar architect, Kenzo Tange. Tange was the most influential *(Continued on page 229)*



DOUBLED BARRELED

This page: Isozaki's Nakagami house in Fukui employs his essential symbol of home, the barrel vault; he uses it for all buildings with a domestic aspect. Though not indigenous to Japanese architecture, the barrel vault has been widely imitated in house designs there since Isozaki introduced it. *Left:* An interior of the Nakagami house and the architect's silkscreen of the exterior.





MANET:
THE DISCREET REBEL OF THE BOURGEOISIE

BY JOHN RICHARDSON



Of all the nineteenth-century innovators Manet is the last to win serious acceptance. Fifty years ago, when the French commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the artist's death with a massive retrospective, it was mostly the old guard who hailed his accomplishments—tepidly. The more progressive critics were too busy showering Cézanne with accolades to do justice to monumental genre scenes by a bourgeois boulevardier. In a notoriously fatuous pronouncement Clive Bell accused Manet—quite falsely—of being "a *sale bourgeois* consumed by a vulgar ambition for honors." Even Roger Fry, blinded by his passion for the Master of Aix, deplored "the great painter for whom Impressionism was a deplorable aberration." And Christian Zervos, editor of *Cahiers d'Art*—by far the most influential avant-garde publication of its day—dismissed one of the finest painters of all time as "uninspired," "mediocre," and "mechanical": someone who "borrowed the eyes and feelings of the past [so] that a real sensation does not exist in his work."

That was fifty years ago. The magnificent retrospective that has closed at the Grand Palais in Paris and just opened—with a few additions and rather more subtractions—at the Metropolitan Museum has met with a far more ecstatic welcome than its predecessor. This time there has been little talk of plagiarism, perhaps because Picasso has demonstrated that a dialogue across the centuries between two great artists can engender fascinating hybrids. At all events this superbly chosen and documented exhibition reveals Manet once and for all as a Janus figure linked as closely to the giants of the past—Velázquez, Hals, and Goya—as he is to the giants of the

Manet is revealed as a Janus figure linked as closely to the giants of the past — Velázquez, Hals, Goya — as he is to the giants of the modern movement



Preceding pages: Lady with Fans, Portrait of Nina de Callias, 1873–74, Musée d'Orsay, Paris. Nina de Callias was described as "a slightly demented muse"—wearing Algerian costume. Artists, poets, musicians, courtesans flocked to her Orientalist salon. She died young of drink and drugs. *Right:* A typical member of the *haute bourgeoisie,* Manet (1832–83) was cultivated, witty, seductive, inordinately discreet. *Above left: Fishing Boat Coming in Before the Wind (The Kearsage at Boulogne),* 1864. Private collection. Manet's interest in current events is shown in this painting of a United States Navy corvette which, in 1864, sank the Confederate ship *Alabama* off the coast of Cherbourg.





Baudelaire could have been writing about Manet when he referred to "the painter of modern life" as a dandy, a stroller who mixes with the crowd, is in the midst of things, and as a personality remains hidden

Masked Ball at the Opéra, 1873–74. National Gallery of Art, Washington. Here a freize of figures surmounted by a freize of top-hats reveals how Manet exploited an infinite gamut of blacks. Manet has painted himself with a blond beard, as the second figure from the right, into this painting of a ball that occurred in Paris every year halfway through Lent. At his feet is a dance card with his name.

modern movement. Small wonder then that the French, at this lackluster moment in their history, should have seized on the pretext of this centenary to demonstrate their supremacy in nineteenth-century art, not least in the Gallic preserve of *luxe, calme, et volupté,* of panache, concision, and cool.

Manet is known to have asked his friend and biographer, Antonin Proust—briefly minister of fine arts—to arrange for his work to be seen as an entity. "Don't let me enter public collections piecemeal," he said. "People might think ill of me." In this respect the artist would have had no complaints about the Paris show: virtually the whole canon of his work was represented. He would be less happy about the New York exhibit: there are crucial gaps. Still the Louvre's understandable refusal to subject such masterpieces as *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* and *Olympia* to a transatlantic trip is mitigated by the extent to which most of us carry memories of these—alas—hackneyed images around in our heads. Another consolation: visitors to the Metropolitan will be spared the sight of the ghastly coat of varnish with which the Louvre has tarted up *Olympia* for this gala occasion. Sacrilege! People who go to exhibitions in order to primp in front of reflective shadows will have to make do with Boston's once beautiful *Chanteuse des rues;* this has acquired a sheen reminiscent of Pistoletto, the Italian artist who depicts his figures on mirrored grounds so as to incorporate onlookers into his images.

Manet was wise to set so much store by totality. For, unlike his Impressionist followers who painted *en série* (Monet did as many as thirty versions of the same subject), Manet worked successively in terms of one-of-a-kind set pieces with which he expected to establish a reputation as a modern artist in the reactionary surroundings of the Salon. In this way he hoped to pit himself against the old masters at their own game, attacking such traditional subjects as religion, history, genre, portraiture, and the nude, but in a revolutionary new manner without recourse to academic discipline and fustian trappings. Inevitably Manet fell foul of Second Empire officialdom and cretinous critics who repeatedly roused the public against his Salon entries, denouncing the imperturbable *Olympia* as "a female gorilla made of India rubber outlined in black." In the circumstances it is perhaps appropriate that the present retrospective should have been held in the Grand Palais, for the way Manet's magnesium flash vision illuminates the gloomy galleries of this *pompier* building celebrates his posthumous triumph over philistine darkness.

Manet's concentration on successive set pieces may have complicated things for the organizers of this show—no substitutes are possible for unavailable paintings—however, it makes for an unmistakably cumulative effect. In particular the exhibition enables us to appreciate how Manet exemplified Baudelaire's concept of the *peintre de la vie moderne,* the artist who would "extract from fashion whatever poetry it might contain" and "distill the eternal from the transitory." Granted, Baudelaire had the reporter-draftsman Constantin Guys in mind, but his close friend Manet could just as well have been the subject of this essay, in which the poet defines "the painter of modern life" as a dandy, a stroller who mixes with the crowd, watches the world go by, is in the midst of things and as a personality remains hidden. Isn't this precisely the attitude that Manet cultivated from the early (1862) *Musique aux Tuileries* to the late (1882) *Bar aux Folies-Bergère*? And isn't this ability to "extract the eternal from the transitory" precisely what distinguishes the timeless appeal of Manet's *Dans la Serre* from the superficial period charm of Tissot's similar composition, which fetched a record price at auction earlier this year?

It is Manet's preoccupation with mankind as opposed to nature that makes his work—for me at any rate—so much more moving and in the last resort rewarding than most of his Impressionist followers. But then I should confess that the painting of light for its own sake no longer gives me any deep satisfaction. Nor do I derive abiding pleasure from evocations, however well wrought, of the weather conditions prevailing in the Parisian *banlieues* or of crops and coppices in the Île de France. Not that I want to belittle the achievements of the Impressionists, but on the evidence of the present show Manet towers over the best of them—over Pissarro, the old patriarch who bogged down in pointilist theory and never quite recovered his form; over Renoir, whose genius petered out in rosy-tinted kitsch that no amount of fine brushwork can redeem; even over Monet, the only one of them to cross new frontiers in old age. For all the magic of the *Nymphéas,* Monet lacks the ballast and brio of Manet's humanism, not to speak of the silken beauty of his paint.

And what a key role Manet played in the stylistic development of the Post Impressionists: Gauguin, whose Tahitian nudes pay tribute to *Olympia;* Toulouse-Lautrec, who derived so much inspiration from Manet's themes and stylistic preoccupations; van Gogh, whose sunflowers, as he admitted, stemmed from Manet's "huge pink peonies—as free in the open air and as much a flower as anything could be, and yet painted in a perfectly solid impasto." As for twentieth-century artists, the Cubists Metzinger and Gleizes hailed Manet "less because he represented everyday events than because he endowed the most ordinary objects with a radiant reality. . . ." By the same token, Matisse, for all that he insisted on his debt to Cézanne, looked to Manet for his seemingly casual groupings and his figures that have been so emphatically flattened, simplified, and outlined.

Picasso, on the other hand, never made any secret of his indebtedness. Early works abound with references to Manet (compare the huge Rose Period *Bateleurs* with Manet's *Vieux Musicien,* both of which hang in the National Gallery in Washington). Later in his career the resemblance of his second *(Text continued on page 200)*

Manet was the first major artist since the Renaissance
o fly in the face of proportion and perspective, perversely aggrandizing a hand
at the expense of a face and arbitrarily omitting inconvenient
visual facts if this gave his image greater plastic force



Baudelaire's Mistress, Reclining, 1862, Szépmüvészeti Múzeum, Budapest. The ferocious face of Baudelaire's ferocious *Black Venus,* Jeanne Duval (a Creole), is a harsh foil for the virtuoso display of painting in the huge white-on-white skirt.
Overleaf: Races at Longchamps, 1867, The Art Institute of Chicago. Manet is said to have hurled himself at this canvas in a frenzy of brushstrokes, as can be seen in his treatment of this crowd-action painting. This detail is actual size.







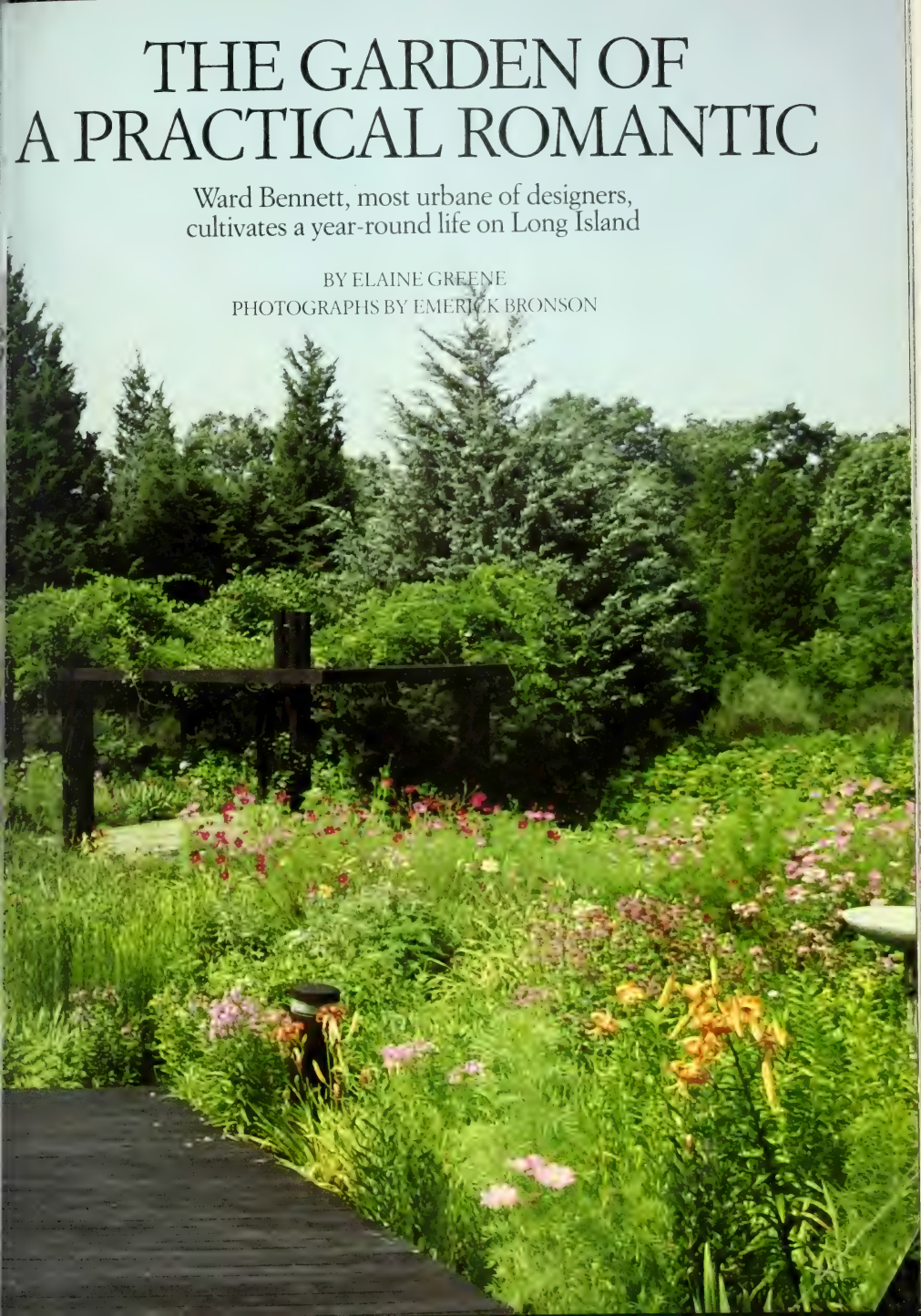
THE FLOWER GARDEN IN MIDSUMMER

Between the house and the arbor ... generous drifts of color succeed ... each other as the seasons chan... Midsummer is bright with tiger ... lilies, cosmos, rudbeckia, even... primrose, phlox, and ... the arbor, trumpet vi...

THE GARDEN OF A PRACTICAL ROMANTIC

Ward Bennett, most urbane of designers, cultivates a year-round life on Long Island

BY ELAINE GREENE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY EMERICK BRONSON



During the recent Brooklyn Bridge Centennial celebrations, a popular journalist commented that he preferred the works of nature to the works of man—works of nature like Central Park, he explained. Evidently he thought, as some do, that Central Park is what Manhattan Island looked like when the Indians owned it. The park is, of course, as much a human achievement as the bridge.

Designer Ward Bennett's garden, too, might first appear to be nature in the wild, but it is his deliberate creation as surely as is one of his pure and timeless chairs. Fifteen years ago, having acquired a thirty-acre tract on Gardiner's Bay, Long Island—a parcel developed in the past only to the extent of one small shack—Bennett built a house and began an ambitious landscaping project that will always be a work in progress. Plantings in the acre-large flower garden are constantly renewed or replanned, sometimes as a result of discoveries made on Bennett's habitual walks in local nature preserves and other wild places. In the meadow between his house and the bay, where grasses, bayberry, and beach plum thrive, he sows new wildflowers every year: lupine, coreopsis, ironweed. He rummages in the woods for big ferns to transplant near the house. He is developing an oak walk in one part of his woods, removing dead trees, thinning out saplings, feeding for the first time, and opening a clearing for summertime camp fires. On his drawing board is a new Japanese-influenced gate for the arbor area.

When Ward Bennett began his landscaping, he found the land low and marshy near the edges of the water. He called in earthmovers to make a place for a house and swimming pool high enough to be safe from storm tides and to allow him to gaze over the flats and inlets to the bay beyond.

Bennett designed himself a year-round house of redwood and hired a boat builder to put it together with bolts and glue instead of nails. It is square and dark outside—the siding stain is two parts black to one part brown—but inside it is light and airy. A vast skylight, softened by swaths of translucent cloth slung below it, roofs the living area. Huge panels of glass form this room's bay side, which in deep winter is covered by great wooden walls that swing like opera scenery on quarter-circle tracks. Bennett's bedroom, big enough to contain a drafting table and design files, opens widely to a high-walled courtyard that traps the winter sun. A new porch, glassed-in or screened-in depending on the season, cantilevers over the flower garden. Inside the house all is quiet and comfortable. Outside in the garden there is brilliance of color, extravagance of concept, controlled rampancy—all according to plan.

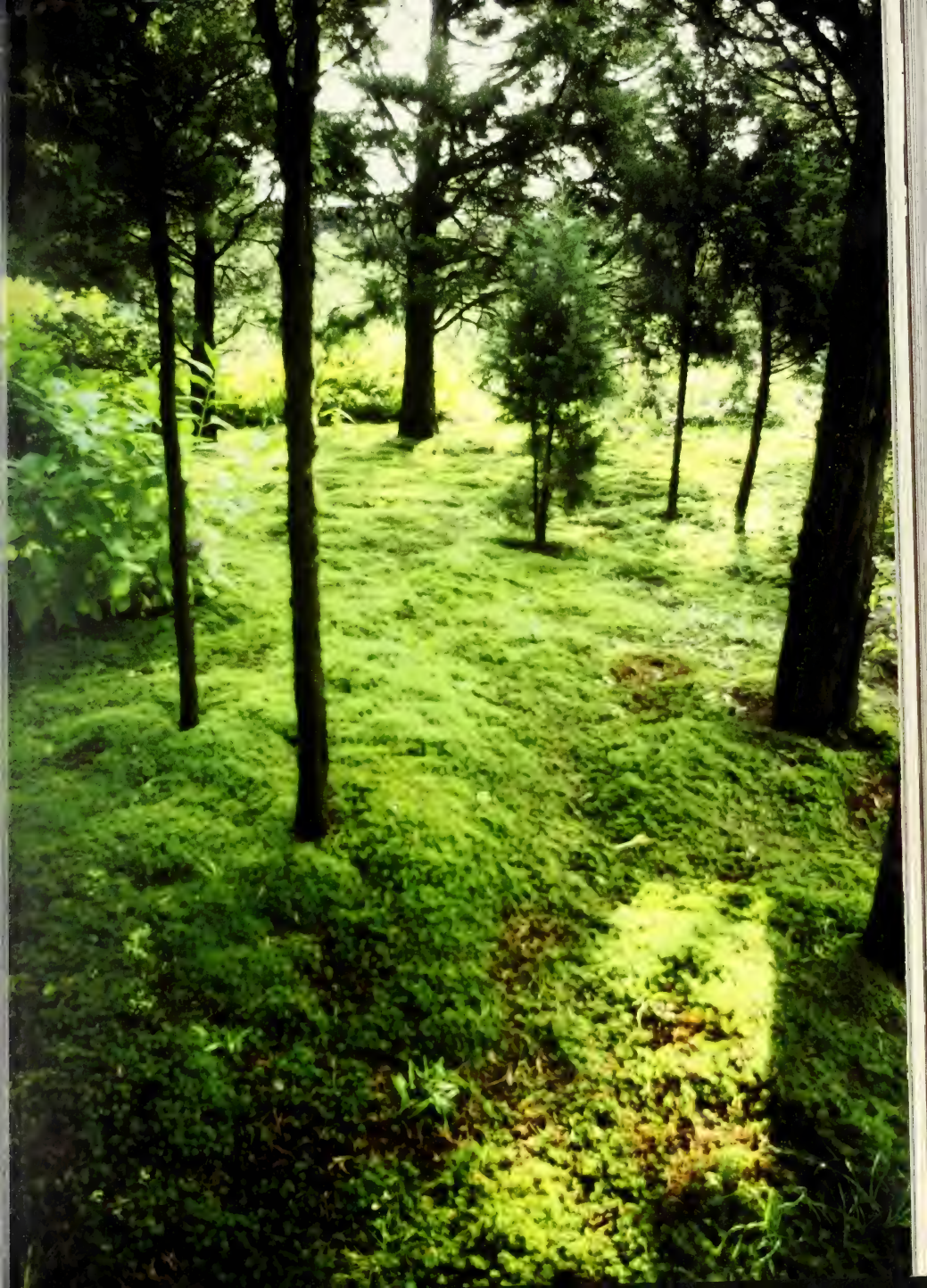
The garden was begun with the grading of a slope up to the house. Then the soil—mostly sand—had to be enriched with tons of topsoil and truckloads of manure. Dense cedar groves covered much of the acreage, and the trees near the house were either cut down (where they blocked the water and garden views) or stripped of their lower branches (where they were to be looked at and walked beneath). Bennett chooses and places his flowers to give him drifts of color and texture through all the growing seasons and with the smallest amount of trouble. This means knowing which plants are least subject to pests, which demand the lowest maintenance, which he can put in the ground and turn his back on until they bloom luxuriantly. It means knowing the territory: the ecosystem in general as well as his own small piece of it.

If you ask Ward Bennett how he became a gifted landscaper, he will claim to have "no background." Yet he remembers that as a child in a New York City tenement he grew plants on the fire escape in those nicely made wooden cream-cheese boxes that disappeared some time in the forties. Later, studying painting with Hans Hofmann in Provincetown, Bennett became a devotee of seaside gardens. When Peggy Guggenheim, a member of the Provincetown artists' set, moved to eastern Long Island, Bennett and Jackson Pollack, among others, joined the migration and found the same terrain and plant population. And so Ward Bennett, first as a renter, then as an owner, learned the ways of seaside gardening.

He is a lifelong learner, an autodidact

THE MOSS GARDEN IN SUMMER

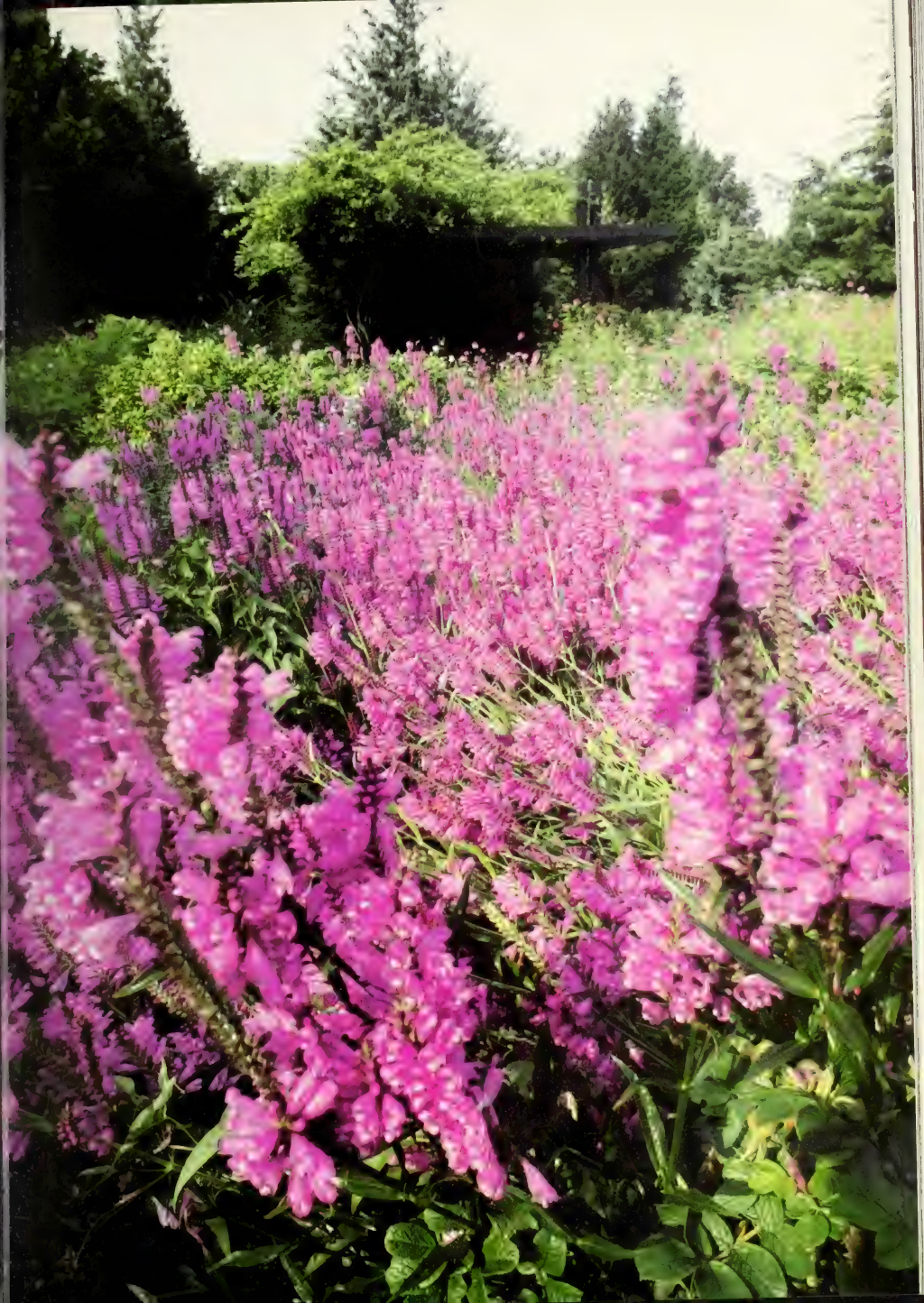
The moss garden began with the discovery of mosses and lichens here and there on the property. Ward Bennett partially cleared a cedar grove along the path that leads from the entrance area to the flower garden and house, pruning lower branches from the remaining trees for the shape he came to admire as a young man in Florence. Then he collected star moss wherever he could find it on his land, replanting it for an undulating sea of tender, springy greenness. Blue hydrangeas also grow here.





AROUND THE ARBOR SPRING AND SUMMER

This page: White wisteria blooms on the arbor in spring, to be succeeded by clematis and trumpet vine. *Opposite*: In late summer, physostegia, also called Obedient Plant and False Dragonhead, has its glorious day.







extraordinaire. Bennett left home and school and went to work at age fourteen pushing delivery racks in the streets of New York's garment district. Soon he had finished a short course in drawing. He became a teen-age fashion illustrator, then a fashion designer, then a "window dresser," as display artists used to be called. After World War II Bennett went to Paris to attend sculpture classes on the GI Bill, but he learned even more from looking at the work of his new aquaintances Brancusi and Le Corbusier. Back in New York in the early fifties, Ward Bennett moved into interior design, and it was only natural to create furniture for his clients. Today the Bennett furniture and fabric line is a flourishing business for Brickel Associates; Supreme Cutlery produces his stainless steel flatware. He still accepts at least one major interior design commission a year.

A combination of practicality and romanticism, earthiness and elegance, marks all the achievements of the man. In his garden Ward Bennett is able to balance a wildness that resembles raw nature with the refinement of cedars pruned into "Florentine" forms. He is a follower of Zen Buddhism and believes in submitting to nature at the same time that he is molding it. Thus he watches benignly when one species crowds out another, yet he prevails over the most brutal droughts with a sophisticated watering system, he mulches everywhere with pine chips, and he employs a person who weeds one day a week.

The pleasures of the garden are many. It is for looking at, touching and smelling, gathering bouquets in, strolling through, working in, planning for, thinking of. Under its shady arbor, Ward Bennett reads, meditates, and feeds his guests the simple, fresh local food he prefers. The swimming pool is part of the life of the garden as well, its inky surface reflecting the trees and sky, its placid coolness and straight lines a dramatic contrast to the intricate, shaggy bright flowers near it.

A complex man does complex work. Complexity lies beneath the Zen simplicity that Ward Bennett strives for, the ultimate serenity of nature disciplined. He strives for that perfection; he draws closer to it. □

Produced by Babs Simpson

A REFLECTIVE SWIMMING POOL

Swimmers in the pool can see marshes and inlets in one direction and the field of flowers in another, but looking at the pool itself is a pleasure. Painted black inside, which in practical terms means less-chilly water, the utterly simple pool gathers mirrorlike reflections. The surrounding deck is stained every year for the charcoal look Ward Bennett wants, with the same two-parts-black, one-part-brown that he uses on the house and other decks. Pinwheels are there to discourage redwing blackbirds, but Bennett is otherwise an ardent bird fancier. He actually found the property on a bird walk.

This page: By August, rosa rugosa, here in the foreground, has long since bloomed all over this garden, to be followed by rudbeckia, lilies, and phlox. *Opposite:* From a nearby vantage point, the ghostly winter garden has its own monochromatic loveliness punctuated by holly berries and rose hips.





THE GRAND MANNER IN THE LONE STAR STATE

Robert Denning and Vincent Fourcade design an opulent house in Houston

PHOTOGRAPHS BY OBERTO GILI

Past was prologue when, one year ago, a young Houston couple and decorator Robert Denning (of the New York firm Denning & Fourcade) took on an undistinguished sixteen-year-old house. The owners loved the comfort and style that Denning had brought to their previous house with an occasional use of nineteenth-century furnishings. When they moved larger, they asked him to carry out, on a bolder scale, an eclectic nineteenth-century scheme—Regency, Biedermeier, Napoleon III, and Victorian. Not only were nineteenth-century things readily available locally, but the owners were enchanted by the look: "Nineteenth-century rooms are sometimes whimsical, sometimes elegant, but they never take themselves too seriously or leave us cold." The owners otherwise lead a very twentieth-century life, with two young children and a daunting professional and charitable schedule.

Opposite: Living-room mirror reflects an Art Nouveau terra-cotta nude and a majolica vase on a Georgian tea table. Louis Bowen bordered paper underscores Victorian prints—Bedouins, poet Frances Osgood, and *The Bloomer Costume* among them.

Overleaf: Mirrored coffers brighten the conservatory. Reproduction French table between Aubusson-covered chairs holds a circa-1885 copy of a Roman oil lamp, Napoleon III silk firescreen panel, and a Japanese bowl





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Overleaf: The conservatory is a favorite spot for cocktails before dinner. By the Georgian handkerchief card table, Victorian chairs in Scalamandré damask. Perennial flowers: Rose Cumming chintz, a rug from Stark.





Above: A pair of Scottish engravings and smaller bookplates flank a window dressed in taffeta and Greeff lace. Stool is Regency; Hamadan rug is set in brown broadloom.

When Queen Victoria ruled, even modest furnishings were rather luxurious—solid wood, matched veneers, and cotton velvet were standard options. Yet the buxom bourgeois style of the seating obliges anyone who would care to curl up on it and read—be the book Nabokov or Mrs. Beeton. Wherever possible, the owners kept the old upholstery and picture frames their Victorian chairs and varied engravings came in. When they had to reupholster, as with the living-room sofas from their old house, they ferreted out "fuddy-duddy fabric that looked faded even when new."

Bob Denning's professional relationship with the couple has been long and close. He had also done two houses for the woman's mother, and one house for each of the woman's two brothers. An understanding verging on telepathy enabled them to do much of the planning over the phone between Houston and New York. The woman logged many miles of preparatory browsing in such local shops as Hart Galleries and Simpson Galleries. Bob Denning flew in a few times to retrace her steps and advise on purchases. Once she bought something he hadn't seen—a beautiful rug for the conservatory—second-hand and handmade; otherwise it would have been an object lesson in "she who hesitates is lost."

In the portico-shaded conservatory, the existing coffered ceiling, just ten feet high, looked a bit oppressive. Client and decorator read each other's minds: mirrors set within the coffers. They chose plastic mirror for safety and, as Bob explains, so you see yourself dimly and without the distraction of clarity. The conservatory overlooks

Opposite: An offbeat background for dining—a Gothic Revival oak bookcase. Gadroon chargers set off antique Spode china. Flatware is "Repousse" by Kirk; crystal by Orrefors. Napoleon III vases frame an heirloom bronze dish.

Overleaf: The conservatory is a favorite spot for cocktails before dinner. By the Georgian handkerchief card table, Victorian chairs in Scalamandré damask. Perennial flowers: Rose Cumming chintz, a rug from Stark.





oaks and crape myrtles, and in the summer the pink, purple, and white flowers are a particularly pretty backdrop for the rosy chintz indoors.

The dining room facing the foyer doubles as a library once plates are cleared away. Though the room is scarcely bigger than an old-fashioned bathroom, two pieces give it presence: a Napoleon III table, squarish like the room, that can seat ten people (two at each end) without being extended, and an early-nineteenth-century bookcase that practically covers one wall. A knack for adapting imposing pieces of antique furniture to contemporary needs is shown elsewhere in the house: the family eats breakfast at a round rent table that stows linens and silverware in its drawers. Before the children's bedtime, they repair to the entry ell of the master bedroom and watch the television tucked inside a Victorian fruitwood armoire.

Beds with footboards are a Denning signature. The owners say that when you're drifting off to sleep, it helps to know there's stout mahogany between you and the world. The woman of the house had second thoughts, though, about the first purchase she made for the master bedroom—grisaille paper panels: "Bob and I had a running dialogue over the phone. I'd say, 'I'm afraid the room won't take all that pattern.' He'd say, 'Hang the panels.' I'd answer, 'But you're not here.' 'It doesn't matter. Hang the panels.'" Finally, a year later, she did. And Bob Denning is off and running on a seventh project for the family—a second house for one of her brothers. □

By Margaret Morse. Produced by Jacqueline Gonnet



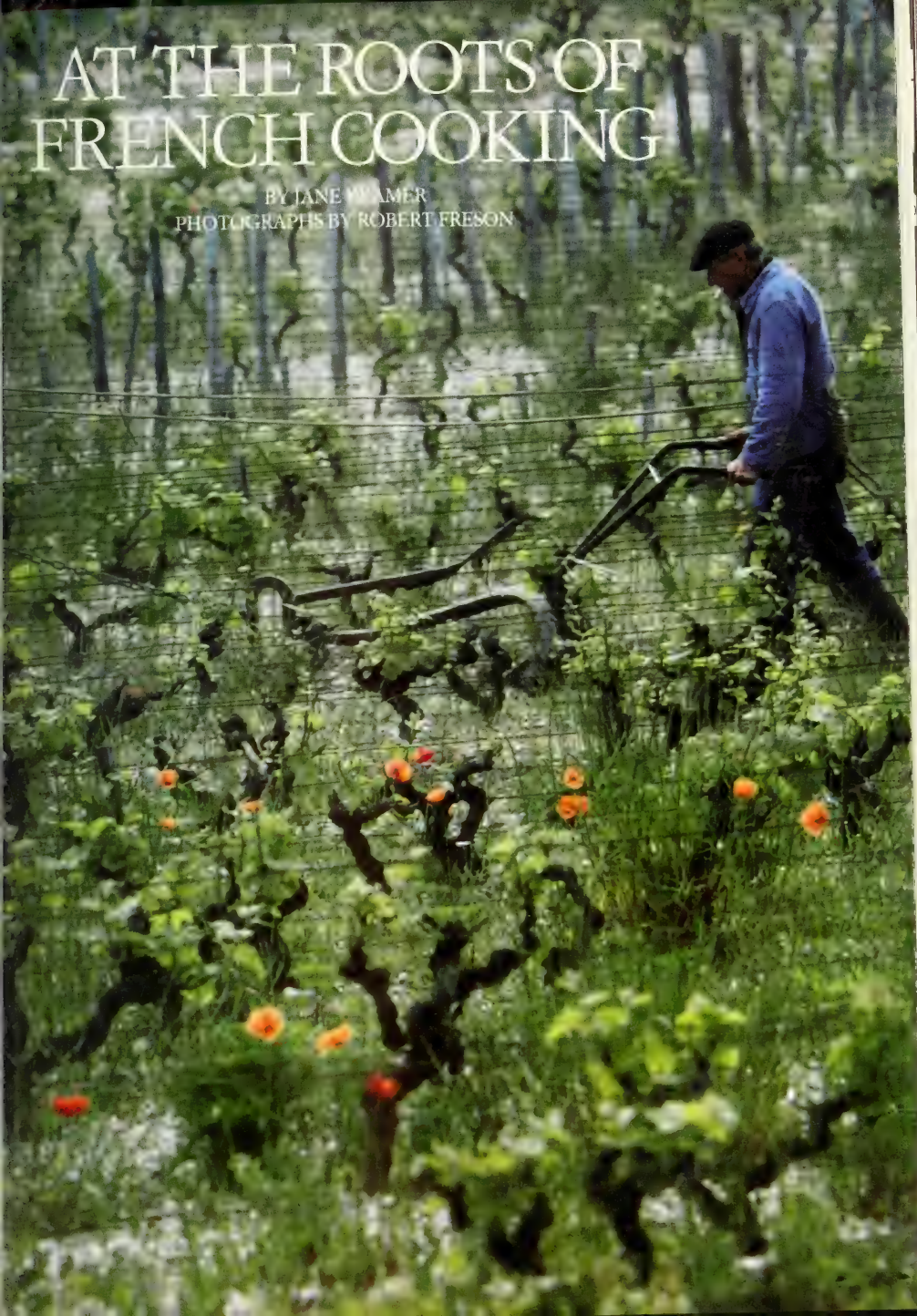
Right: The English Victorian half-canopy bed was widened to king size by two new insets, carved by a local carpenter. New "keyhole" shows where one cabriole footpost was before reassembly. Behind it, *Pax Labor* in bronze by Edouard Drouot.

Opposite: A trip the couple took to France inspired a lavish mix of patterns—antique Aubusson rug, Rose Cumming chintz, and Louis Bowen wall panels and bordered paper. Biedermeier bureau holds a clock garniture with pedestals for potpourri.



AT THE ROOTS OF FRENCH COOKING

BY JANE WARNER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROBERT FRESON



Two celebrations of the enduring pleasures of French country life and the unpretentious practicality of its cooking: Jane Kramer's reflections on living in a Provençal village and Robert Freson's photographs from his forthcoming book *The Taste of France.*

Years ago, in the Vaucluse, I lived next door to a crone by the name of Berthe, and it was Berthe who, in a manner of speaking, taught me French country cooking. Berthe was eccentric, even by the standards of villagers who washed their sheets only under a full moon and dug up cemetery dirt to leave on their neighbors' doorsteps when they were displeased. She owned an old farmstead—a *mas,* in Provençal—a few miles away in one of the Luberon valleys, but she had long since abandoned it for the village, settling herself and about forty rabbits into a rank little *dépendance* next to the house my husband and I had rented that year. Berthe did not like her valley very much. Its beauty was the sweep of a scrub and lavender Provence landscape—more hospitable to the Parisians who vacationed in it than to the peasants who had to farm it. Winters in the valley were raw, summers were punishing, and Berthe, like most of the other peasants, had an almost atavistic memory of the valley's original uses: it was battleground to the Waldensian heretics who had fled into the Luberon range in the twelfth century and the Catholics sent out by a succession of Avignon popes to harass them. Berthe camped at her abandoned mas when she had to—when she had to press her olives for oil or see to what remained of her old kitchen garden—but by the time I knew her she was a creature of our funny walled Catholic village, hanging off its side of the mountain as if it had tipped over centuries ago looking for Protestants. Her stone dépendance was a hut, really, a kind of warren—dark, hot, thick with the smell of rabbit fur and rabbit droppings. You had to bend over to get inside and blink a lot to see anything at all. My daughter, Wicky, who was a baby then, liked it at Berthe's. She liked to watch Berthe's rabbits eat lettuce leaves. The rabbits would sit in their hutch with their lettuce and Wicky would sit on the dirt floor, peering in, with her bottle of apple juice, and they would make the same kind of steady and contented sucking sounds. Wicky was especially fond of a big, bleary rabbit we called Julien Nibble, after the Surrealist art dealer Julien Levy, who had a place in the Vaucluse and sometimes drove over to buy a rabbit from Berthe—and who once remarked that Berthe's hut, with its forty rabbits and its wall of crucifixes, would make a terrific Max Ernst.

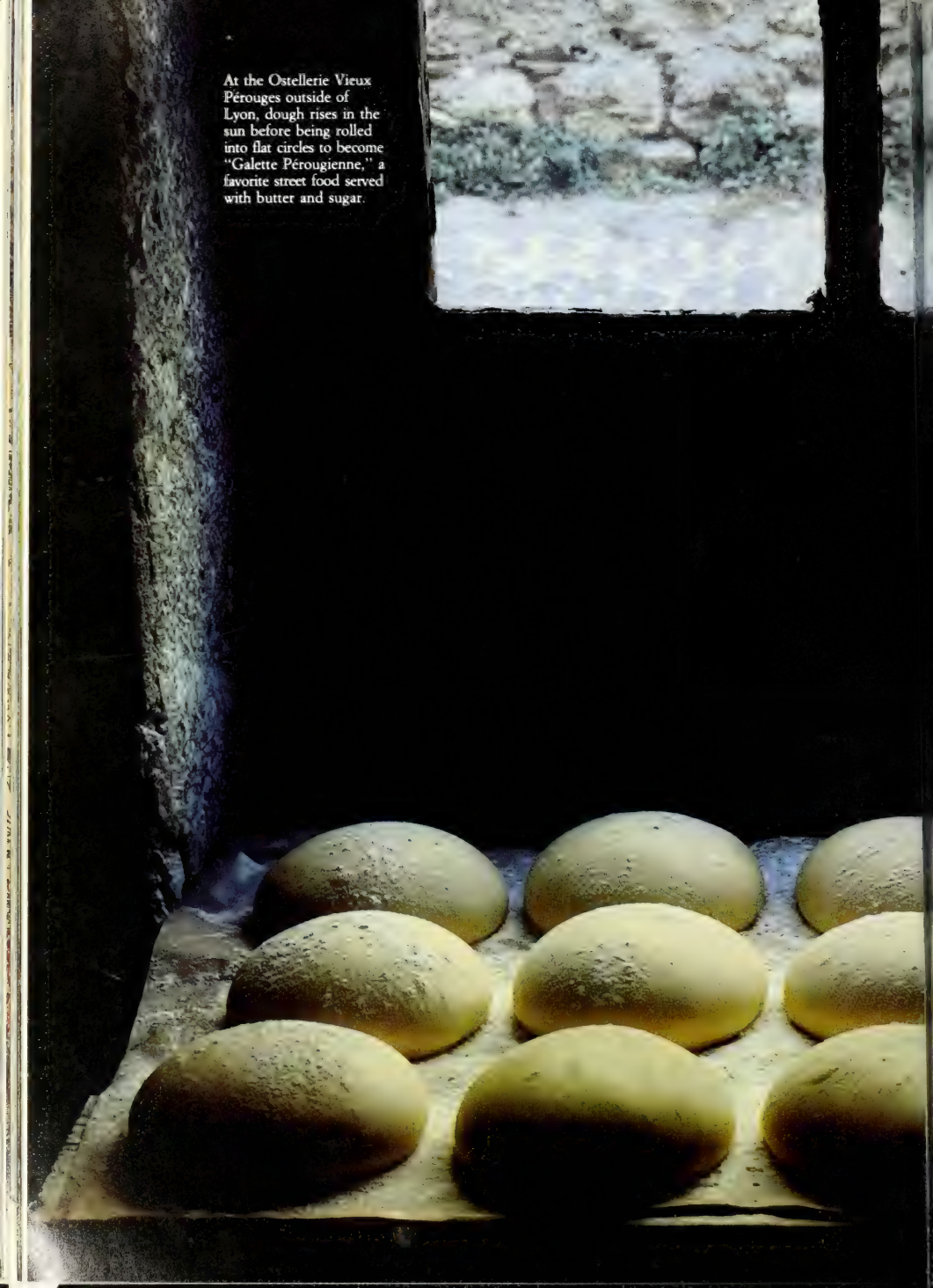
On the morning of my daughter's first birthday, Berthe arrived at the kitchen door with a basket on her arm. She had a present for Wicky. She held open the basket, folded back a dishtowel, and there was Julien Nibble—slaughtered, skinned, and stuffed with branches of thyme and rosemary. He was, I suppose, a sacrifice to friendship, having to do with ancient peasant notions of ingestion and assimilation. Certainly Berthe was pleased with herself that morning. Holding up her rabbit, giving us a heady whiff of flesh and thyme, she seemed to be saying that the best way for a child to keep a friend forever was to eat one.

My husband is an anthropologist, and rarely bewildered by the variety of human courtesy. He took our daughter for a ride to the market town and bought ice cream and balloons. Berthe waited in the kitchen, moved by her own extravagance and by the appropriateness—the justice, even—of her gesture. It was, in fact, a Grand Gesture, a triumph of imagination over a miser's instinct to burrow and hoard, though at the time all I knew was that I had Julien Nibble in my kitchen and no idea of how to cook him. Berthe told me. I still have her recipe, as I wrote it down that morning (chop the rabbit into eight pieces; marinate in olive oil with the thyme and rosemary and a little lemon juice; cook in the marinade, adding white wine, lots of fresh garlic, carrots, and onions), and I remember that at the end I pounded some capers, anchovies, garlic, and parsley into a paste and added that along with a handful of tiny black local olives to make what a friend who came to dinner called *lapin au saupiquet.* The rabbit was delicious. It tasted, if the word applies, friend-

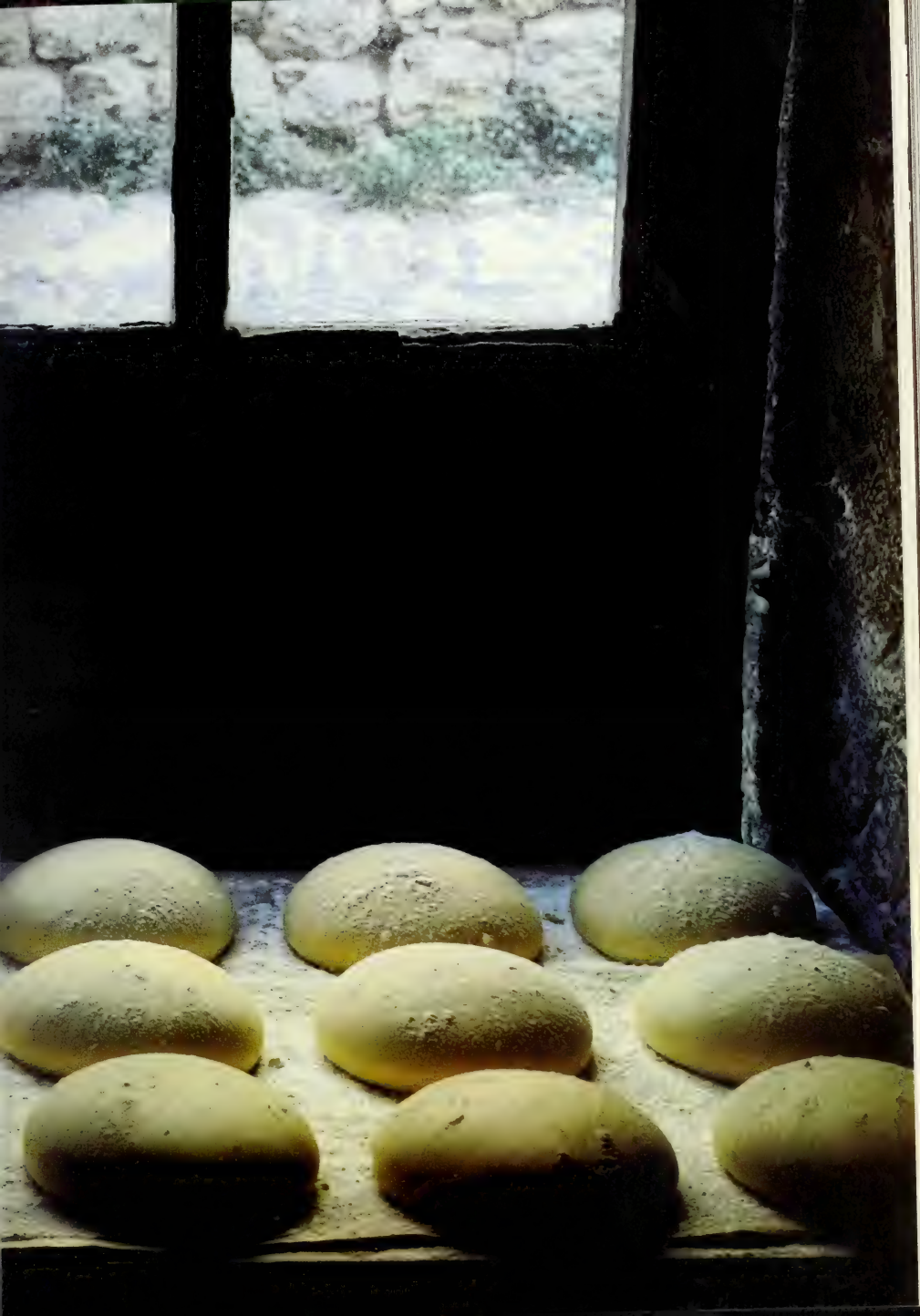
Preceding pages: In Bordeaux, a wine grower and his horse plow the soil of the Sauternes. *Opposite:* A tart *aux quetsch* in a flan ring at the Maison des Tanneurs in Strasbourg, where the plums are boiled with sugar and water, arranged over a cream pastry, and baked.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROBERT FRESON FROM HIS FORTHCOMING BOOK *THE TASTE OF FRANCE* TO BE PUBLISHED BY STEWART, TABORI & CHANG IN OCTOBER 1981





At the Ostellerie Vieux Pérouges outside of Lyon, dough rises in the sun before being rolled into flat circles to become "Galette Pérougienne," a favorite street food served with butter and sugar.



ly. I puréed a tiny piece of it and fed it to Wicky on a Heudebert biscuit (Heudebert makes a kind of French zwieback). She made a terrible face, but she kept it down.

We tend to romanticize country cooking. We go to Burgundy in July and eat a juicy tomato salad and pretend that eating tomato salads when the tomato supply is good and so are the prices is somehow a statement of authenticity and integrity. I wonder if we amuse the peasants who produce, by definition, "country cooking." French country cooking, with its preserves and pâtés and *confits,* has less to do with eating tomatoes at their ripest moment than with making tomatoes last beyond their moment and still taste good. In cooking, the seasons are *our* luxury and the peasant's discipline. The satisfactions of a pot-au-feu or a farm terrine or a rough bacon-and-onion tart served up in a country inn on a fall night are the satisfactions of relentless, unpretentious practicality. They are the satisfactions of transforming what one grows—the bounty of the land—into the bounty of the larder. We associate them with mothers and grandmothers in the kitchen, not with chefs in toques, fussing over sauces. They have nothing at all to do with adventure. This is why there *(Text continued on page 226)*



Opposite: A shop in the Saint Jens quarter, Lyon, where there are still many turn-of-the-century shops. *Above:* In Lyon, *Loup en croûte à la sauce choron* is a specialty of Paul Bocuse. Sea bass is stuffed with lobster mousse, wrapped in a pastry crust, and served with sauce *choron,* a mixture of tomatoes, wine, egg yolks, vinegar, and butter.



SKYLINE SIMPLICITY



Interior designers Robert Bray and Michael Schaible remodel a duplex high above Manhattan

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAIME ARDILES-ARCE

Left: In the living room, the working fireplace has a New York Federal pine mantel from Danny Alessandro. In front of the mirrors is a two-piece gold-and-nickel sculpture, *A Diptych* (1975), by Peter Lobello. On the late-nineteenth-century Serapi rug, eighteenth-century Huang Huali Chinese horseshoe-back chairs. At right, Cary's New Terrestrial Globe (English,c. 1825–30). *Above:* The wicker-filled terrace that surrounds the duplex.





Above: Classic Mies van der Rohe chairs surround a four-piece custom-made cherry-red baked-enamel dining table, which comes apart to accommodate more guests. At left, an eight-panel Ching-dynasty (1686) Coromandel screen. *Left:* Lord & Burnham stock greenhouse components create a year-round room. Nineteenth-century Chippendale-style carved mirror is capped with phoenixes.



Above: An early-nineteenth-century American drop-leaf pine harvest table provides a 3-by-8-foot work space in the master bedroom. The eighteenth-century French provincial bench is thought to have been a church pew. Bed and duvet covered in linens from Léron.

It was a logical request from a couple of New Yorkers. They wanted their penthouse duplex to be "restful, as a contrast to life in the city," and to provide a simple, uncluttered showplace for their diverse collection of antiques. The making of this "wonderful little household," as a partner of Bray-Schaible Design remembers it, began with gutting the top floor to open up the living, dining, and kitchen areas. Mirrors were placed on either side of the fireplace to widen the living room. White-painted walls replaced the darker wallpaper. The oak floors were bleached and the basic pieces of furniture were covered in off-white canvas. Wheat-colored wall-to-wall carpeting covered floors in the rooms that didn't get antique rugs. A new greenhouse and additional French doors increased accessibility to the terrace that surrounds the duplex. Color and character came in a variety of forms—including the bright red dining table, a gold and nickel sculpture, a working fireplace, and birch trees in the dining room. ◊ *By Gabrielle Winkel*





IN THE HIGH AESTHETIC LINE

A superb Victorian survival, the London house of *Punch* cartoonist Linley Sambourne is a time capsule of well-bred bohemianism

BY CLIVE ASLET
PHOTOGRAPHS BY SNOWDON

Houses open to the public usually have some element you cannot quite believe in, some slightly jarring detail. Their directors often have more of a flair than the original owners for the theatrical effects of furnishings. When restoring, say, a vanished trimming on a curtain, how much more satisfying it is to put fringe and tassels than leave it plain; the public, it is felt, appreciates the heightened flavor—and who is to say it was not like that? Fabrics perish quickly and interiors are broken up; usually some imaginative guesses are needed in their restoration.

This is why 18 Stafford Terrace in Kensington, London, recently opened to the public by The Victorian Society, is so enthralling. However overdone they sometimes seem, its dark and lushly painted rooms—the light seeping in through stained-glass windows—are unquestionably real. Each picture is original to the house and hangs just as it once did. The absurdly flounced lampshades, which elsewhere might seem implausibly camp, are the very ones shown in photographs of the 1890s. The plush deep-fringed curtains, the embossed Lincrusta wallpaper painted maroon or olive green, the armies of knickknacks or *objets d'art*—photograph frames, figurines, and fans bristling on every palm stand and bureau—all survive in a remarkable state of preservation from the time the house was occupied by the *Punch* illustrator Linley Sambourne and his wife.

It seems the Sambournes did not undertake any major redecoration since they moved in after their marriage in 1874. The only significant change was the replacement of

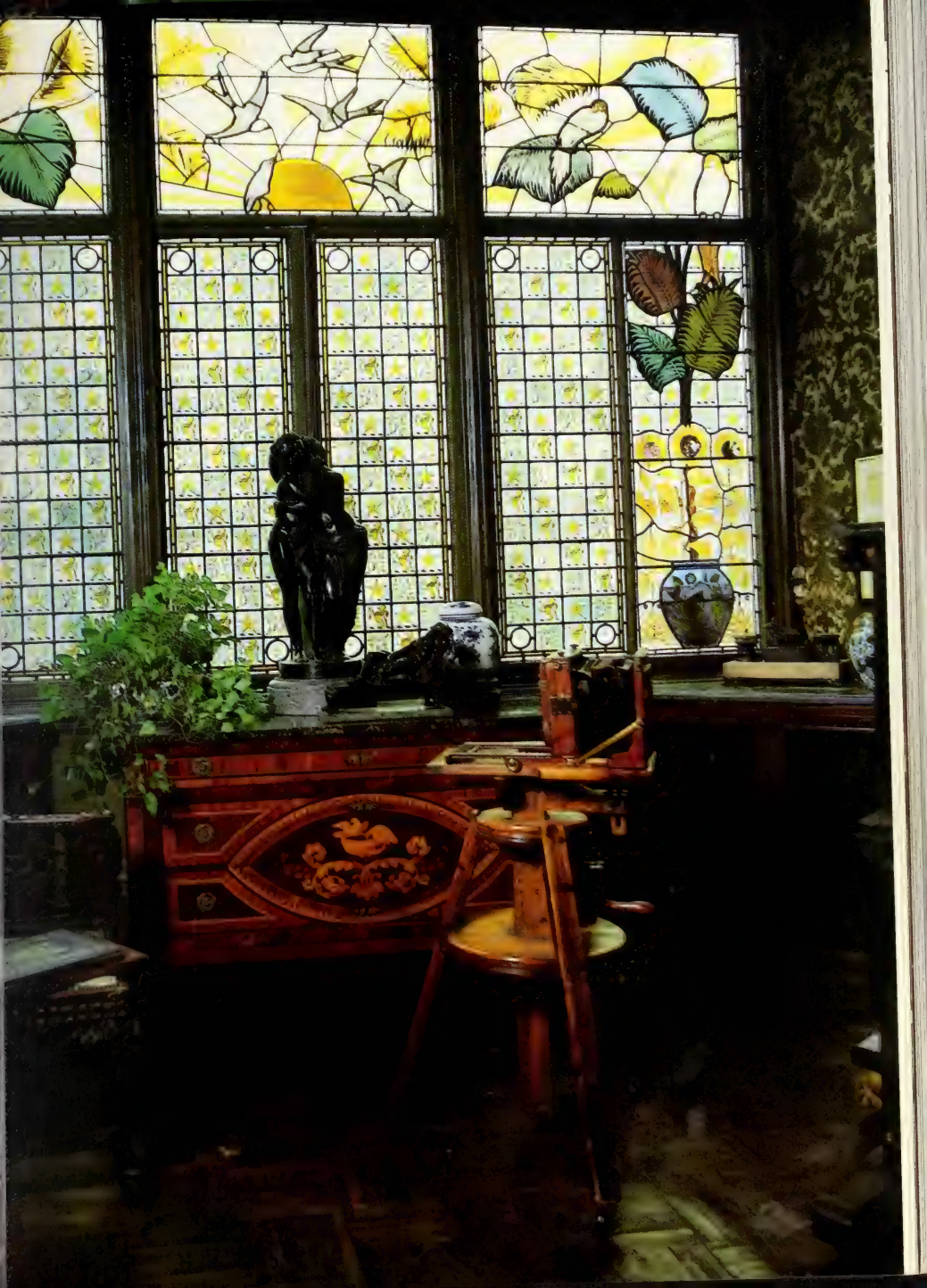
Left: The first-floor drawing room: on the piano used by Sambourne's wife is a fan with small sketches by such friends as George du Maurier and John Tenniel. The large photograph on the right is Sambourne's daughter, Maud, and the two on the far left are of Sambourne in his country tweeds. Around the room are bronze reproductions of well-known statues. Dutch, Japanese, and Chinese porcelain sit against the Lincrusta wallpaper.



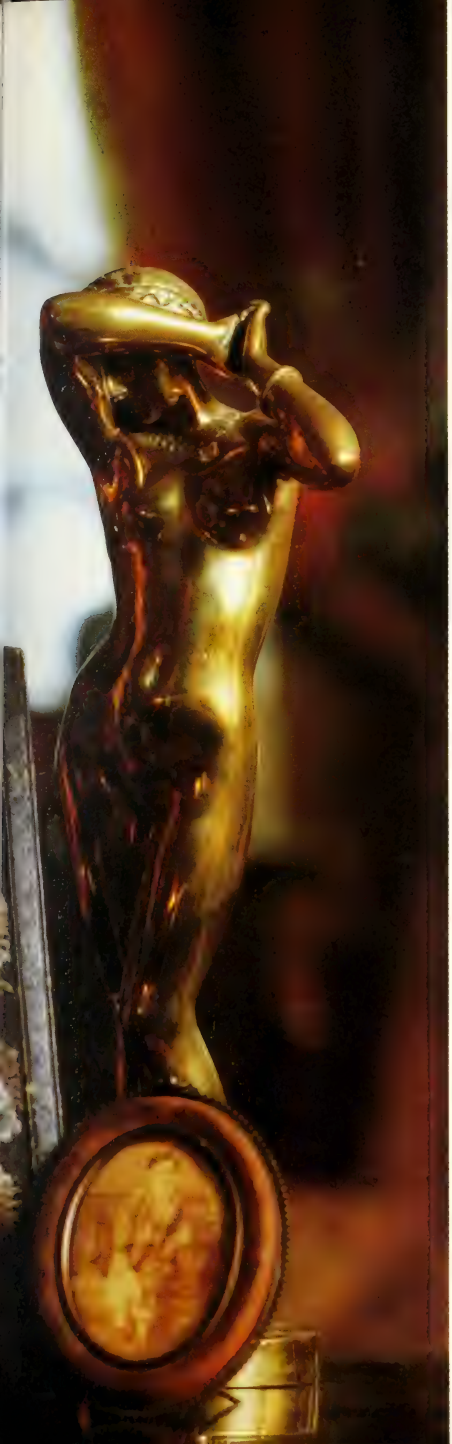
gas lighting by electricity in the late nineteenth century, and all the electrical fittings (some in the form of beaten-copper waterlilies) are of that date. At some point the wallpaper in the drawing room was replaced with a different, richer one, but only in the narrow bands not covered by the pictures, which are so closely packed no one worried about what was behind.

In addition, the family saved everything, including each bill and scrap of paper, so that 18 Stafford Terrace has a wealth of detail unique in Britain. Where other Victorian town houses open to the public in London, such as Carlyle's or Dickens's houses, are re-creations, this one is intact due to an oddly fortunate chain of circumstances. A son, Roy, had a weakness for actresses and did not marry, and a granddaughter, the Countess of Rosse, had several other houses she could live in, as well as a then-unfashionable taste for Victoriana. It was Lady

Right: The bay window, designed by Sambourne with the help of his friend Walter Crane, contains a favorite motif of the Aesthetic Movement: sunflowers for constancy. To the right is Sambourne's camera. *Above:* From the drawing room, a view through the portières down toward the half-landing. To the right of the doorway is a small writing desk with a roll top and a back that pulls up as a firescreen for working near the fireplace. In the rear, far right corner is a high chest full of the many photographs used by Sambourne when he worked at his easel.







Rosse, the mother of Lord Snowdon, who ensured the preservation of the house by selling it to the Greater London Council in 1980.

The choice of 18 Stafford Terrace as an address was something of a compromise for Linley Sambourne and his wife. This part of Kensington acquired strong artistic associations in the 1870s and 1880s, which would have appealed to Sambourne. Only a few streets away is Melbury Road, several of its large red-brick houses now marked with official blue plaques indicating that a successful artist or architect lived there. Nearby in Holland Park Road lived the painter Frederick Leighton, shortly to build his spectacular Arab hall. But those few streets made all the difference. The white stucco and Classical doorcases of Stafford Terrace were conventional—and so, one guesses, were the retired officers, senior civil servants, the barrister, and the successful tradesmen who lived there, according to the 1871 census. The money to buy the house came, apparently, from Sambourne's parents-in-law, and one must assume they may have influenced the conservative choice of street.

The level of comfort in 18 Stafford Terrace reflects the success of *Punch,* just as the decoration reflects the man who spent much of his professional life as "Second Cartoon," his actual job description. The magazine was so much part of the establishment that few British country-house libraries, even today, are without a long row of its maroon-bound volumes, and one of the consolations of a wet afternoon is to leaf through them. Not for the humor: the captions to the drawings invariably spoil the jokes—in any case less than uproarious—by spinning them out in lengthy dialogues. But the illustrations, engraved on wood from pen-and-ink drawings, show a standard of popular art that has probably never been surpassed.

The cartoons were of two main types: topical quips about smart society and allegorical comments on political life. Sambourne specialized in the latter. Originally apprenticed to a shipbuilder in Greenwich, he first worked for the magazine in 1867, having been introduced through a workmate, who was the editor's son. Progress up the *Punch* hierarchy was slow, because, once there, most illustrators stayed for life, and Sambourne was no exception. It was only in 1901, when Sir John Tenniel, the first illustrator of *Alice in Wonderland,* retired, that he became the magazine's principal cartoonist. Although he lacked Tenniel's edge and tight draftsmanship, the weekly cartoon was a solid professional achievement. Often the subject was not finally decided until noon on Friday, and the finished work, prized for its elaboration, had to be ready that very evening.

With middle-class money entering the market, artists in Victorian England could be very prosperous. The most successful built studio houses that had a separate studio entrance to prevent the artist's wife meeting socially doubtful models on the stairs. Linley Sambourne was not quite in this league. He did not have a studio as such, only an extension of the drawing room, which contained his easel. Nor is there a smoking room or a library, the other rooms into which a Victorian gentleman could retreat with his cigar. (Mrs. Sambourne, who looks a

A photograph of Sambourne sporting his country-gentleman look keeps company with, on the left, a figure of Mr. Punch himself on a copy of *The Water Babies,* a book that Sambourne illustrated. To the right is a bronze of a naked nymph hiding her face, and a photograph of Sambourne's son, Roy.















stronger personality in the photograph in the bedroom, may have had more influence than one thinks.) Although he had a wide circle of bohemian friends, he looked more like a portly, jovial country squire than an artist, and it was an impression he fostered. He was fond of riding his horse Blondin (named after a famous tighrope walker), whose hoof is preserved in the drawing room; he shot and fished. He also implied an inflated social prestige in the coats-of-arms and heraldic crests that appear throughout the house—on metal panels on doors, in the stained glass, even on the piano cover in the drawing room. He made fun of *(Text continued on page 198)*

Opposite: Photographs of Victorian paintings hang on William Morris's Pomegranate paper. Porcelain is displayed on the overmantel, a typical Victorian way of making more display space, and above it is Lincrusta paper. The Adams plates are on a table in the style of Pugin. *Top, left to right:* In front of the Boulle clock in the first floor drawing room are a pair of Japanese chrysanthemum jars; the floral cornice and William Morris Pomegranate paper in another color combination, one of three, on the ceiling of the morning room; brown, cream, and blue Encaustic tiles in the entry hall. *Bottom, left to right:* A stained-glass panel in the dining room designed by Sambourne pays homage to *A Midsummer Night's Dream;* paintings designed by Sambourne and Walter Crane adorn the dining-room door panels; a vase of sunflowers is also an aquarium in a stained-glass detail.



This page: A slender ivory hand mirror sporting Sambourne's family crest rests on the side of the marble sink encased in mahogany in the ground-floor cloakroom. *Opposite:* A corner of the morning room where William Morris's Pomegranate paper is bordered by two different papers. A portière on a hinged rail allows the door with paintings designed by Sambourne and Walter Crane to open freely. The late-nineteenth-century interest in the East can be seen in the piece of Japanese embroidery on wall at the lower right.





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(Continued from page 193) aesthetes like Oscar Wilde in his work.

Consequently, the interiors at 18 Stafford Terrace are a mixture. Some touches were advanced and "artistic." For instance, the Japanese prints and the Oriental ceramics, displayed on chimneypieces and above the cornice rails, are hallmarks of the Aesthetic Movement that W.S. Gilbert, a visitor to the house, parodied in *Patience*. Wallpapers from Morris and Co. were widely used. On the other hand, the Sambournes followed fairly conventionally the directions laid down in Charles Eastlake's *Hints on Household Taste* (1868). The sideboard in the dining room, for example, is similar to the one shown in that book. Only the ebonized neo-Grec wardrobe and dressing table in the principal bedroom seem truly avant-garde.

Lady Rosse remembers what it was like to arrive at the house when the Sambournes were there: "The heavy scent of rich Havana cigars was mingled with lavender water, so popular with the gentlemen of that day. Then came the sounds of the ticking of innumerable clocks, the trickle of the landing water fountains, and from the drawing room strains of Schumann on the piano; my grandmother was a good pianist." Those evocative smells and sounds have gone, but it is easy to imagine them in the dark hall—its walls of dark green and oxblood a shock after the white porch. Wallpaper on the underside of the staircase hints at the Victorian obsession with pattern and ornament, seen later in the ceiling papers, mouldings, and roses (the last concealing ventilator grilles for the gaslights). However, in the hall is one of the very few notes that is out of place, since the carpet, although well-chosen, was only put down in the fifties. The Sambournes, as Eastlake recommended, would have walked in onto the floor of geometrically patterned encaustic tiles that exists underneath. It was thought better for muddy boots.

Some of the frames on the wall contain cartoons, sketches, and sporting prints, but most hold photographs—often, surprisingly, photographs of works of art. Perhaps this is a reflection



COURTESY OF THE VICTORIAN SOCIETY

A portly Sambourne in riding gear by cartoonist Sir Leslie Ward, or Spy.

that Sambourne was not, after all, the highest paid artist on *Punch*'s books. He was also fascinated by photography, which was invaluable for his work, since he did not have time to find models. "I use the camera instead," he wrote. In the dining room to the right of the hall, decorated in a dark Pomegranate wallpaper from Morris and Co., are photographs of popular masterpieces of the day, such as J.L.E. Meisonnier's *The Retreat from Moscow* and Luke Fildes's *Applicants for Admission to a Casual Ward*. The dining room still contains the speaking tube, with a porcelain mouthpiece, for communicating with the kitchen below. The latter has now gone to provide room for a caretaker's flat.

A door swathed in a portière curtain gives into the morning room—a smaller, cozier version of the L-shaped drawing room upstairs. Both rooms show Victorian taste at its most eclectic. As the architect and commentator Robert Kerr wrote in *The English Gentleman's House* of 1864: "We live in the era of *Omnium Gatherum;* all the world's a museum, and men and women are its students." At first sight, the furniture at 18 Stafford Terrace looks as though it is a collection assembled over many years. Antiques were, for the first time, coming into vogue, and the furniture here is of different styles—Sheraton, French eighteenth century, neo-Gothic, Chinese lacquer, Victorian mahogany. But closer inspection shows otherwise. Most of the pieces are reproductions, and they were not assembled over a long period since an inventory of 1877 indicates that most were there by that date. The house was filled up very quickly. From the start, a stout man would have had to take care as he edged between the armchairs and the cabinets, the palms and the bronzes.

In a corner of the drawing room is Sambourne's easel, and beside it chests of drawers full of reference photographs, supposedly as many as 10,000. They are filed under subject, so that anything from a newly born baby to a kneeling youth holding a sword could be reproduced during the Friday afternoon scramble. An album wittily labeled *Zoological Studies* contains nothing but fashionable young ladies whether bathing at Brighton or walking in Hyde Park. Other photographs show Sambourne himself, dressing up as an admiral or a judge when there was no one else on hand to fill the role. Only on the floor above do we move forward in time, and then only to the 1910s. Roy's bedroom commemorates the bachelor son who inherited the house. Here the photographs are largely of Edna May, an actress, who signed one, "Remembrances of many bull times." There are other actresses too—and, a little sadly, this man about-town's opera hat. Under the influence of his sister, Maud, who became Mrs. L.C.R. Messel, he preserved the house unchanged. On Mrs. Messel's death in 1960, it passed to her daughter, Lady Rosse, who entertained here but did not redecorate. It was at 18 Stafford Terrace that The Victorian Society was formed in 1958, and how appropriate that it should be administering this miraculously undisturbed house now. □

18 Stafford Terrace is open to the public Wednesdays and Sundays from March 1 to October 31.

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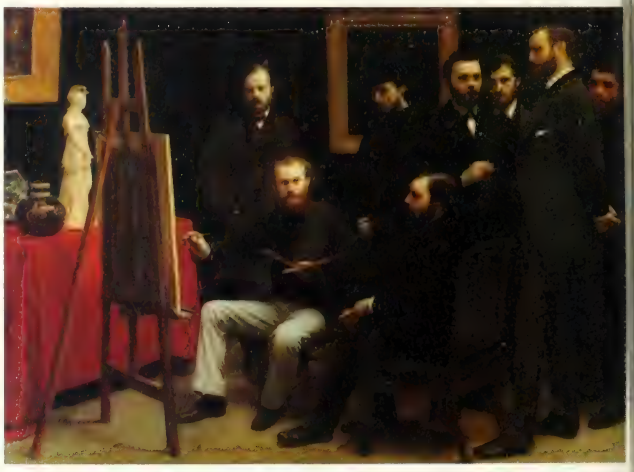
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Inevitably Manet fell foul of Second Empire officialdom and cretinous critics

(Continued from page 150) wife to Lola de Valence prompted the artist to substitute her head for that of Manet's Spanish dancer in a sequence of drawings. Later still (1959–61) Picasso spent two years locking horns with Manet, as witness hundreds of paintings, drawings, and prints after *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe,* each one more comical, lyrical, and compositionally inventive and witty than the next. Manet's *volonté de choquer*—as exemplified by his kinky picnic scene of two formally attired young men lolling beside a defiantly naked girl—enchanted Picasso for exactly the same reasons that, a century earlier, it had scandalized visitors to the Salon des Refusés. As he said, the *Déjeuner* had the raunchiness of real life about it. And trust Picasso, with his instinctive feeling for the pattern of art history, to perceive that this hoary old favorite is the first masterpiece of the modern movement, that it revolutionized the art of the nineteenth century as much as his *Demoiselles d'Avignon* revolutionized that of the twentieth.

Although an aloof and discreet bourgeois who aspired to a conventional success, Manet had an innately rebellious spirit and enough moral courage to challenge the establis ment, bait the public, and break a rules he felt like breaking. He was t first major artist since the Renaissan to fly in the face of proportion and pe spective, perversely aggrandizing hand at the expense of a face and ar trarily omitting inconvenient visu facts if this gave his image greater pla tic force. And then he was years ahe of his time in his rejuvenation of r mantic or picturesque contrivance Instead of making concessions to t bourgeois penchant for anecdote ar sentiment, prettification or symbo ism—for instance, dissembling a ra subject with a genteel fiction, like t Salon artist who entitled his sculptu of a woman in the throes of orgas *Nymph Stung by a Serpent*—Man coolly rubbed the public's nose in t real thing.

Furthermore, Manet was the fir modern artist to exploit local color, a in the eye-catching railings of *Le Ba con,* which he executed in house-pai green (as Picasso would do with ripoli in the twenties), or, in the same compo sition, the intense blue of the man cravat, which, as the Canadian artis Jean-Paul *(Continued on page 202*



Fantin-Latour's faith in Manet, seated, is shown in *An Atelier in the Batignolles*



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The expressionistic *Portrait of Berthe Morisot, with Hat, in Mourning,* 1874.

(Continued from page 200) Riopelle observed, packs as much visual punch as if a real tie had been pinned to the painting. No less innovative is Manet's fondness for subtle gradations of white-on-white and his infinite gamut of blacks, which are not destined for background effects but are active colors with a positive pictorial role to play. Intimations of Malevich! Manet makes us realize how blinkered the Impressionists were to keep black from sullying the spectrum of their palettes.

Nor should we overlook the deceptive clumsiness of Manet's compositions, which reflect his partiality for the informal groupings of everyday life over the stilted *poses plastiques* of the Salon. Or his exploitation of Japanese woodcuts not just for their decorative or exotic qualities (*pace* Whistler) but as a vital ingredient of the modern style he was perfecting, a means of flattening forms, simplifying spatial notation, and giving his compositions decorative unity. Or his gestural way with paint, as when he conjures up the crowd at a bullfight or racecourse with Pollock-like blotches of pigment. Or the extent to which his canons of female beauty have stood the test of time—doesn't the haunted expression that he brought out in portraits of his protégée and sister-in-law, Berthe Morisot (dismissed at the time as "weird and ugly"), conform to the "natural" look of women who keep up with today's fashions? Or, lastly, the way he immortalized the costume of his epoch. In this connection I especially enjoy Man-

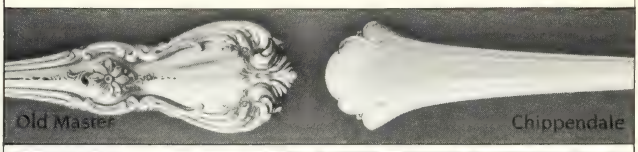
transformation of that mundane
le of nineteenth-century clothing,
op-hat, into a ready-made art ob-
—the forerunner of those shiny
k cylinders around which Fernand
er built his machine aesthetic.
y 1880 the Salon public had begun
ome around to Manet's innovative
on. Encouraged by this, he offered
resco the Council Chamber of the
Hôtel de Ville in Paris with a series
:upendous scenes of modern life—
kets, railways, docks, racecourses
parks (his theme, *Le Ventre de Par-*
was borrowed from Zola)—and a
ling painting depicting great
nchmen of the period. Even if the
nicipality had bothered to answer, I
ıbt if Manet would have been able
:omplete anything of the kind. By
81 illness had condemned him to
rk on an increasingly reduced
le—hence the impressionistic gar-
ı scenes, pastel portraits, and flower
ces of his last period—until he seri-
ly contemplated taking up minia-
:e painting. When he died of
omotor ataxia in 1883, at the age of
Manet had produced a masterful
uvre, as the present exhibition tri-
ıphantly attests. But in the last re-
rt his genius was not fulfilled.
anet's swansong, *Un Bar aux Folies-*
rgère, opens up tantalizing vistas of
painted masterpieces carrying on
o the twentieth century—allegories
modern life that no other artist
uld have had the verve or the vision
alone the human insights to tackle. □

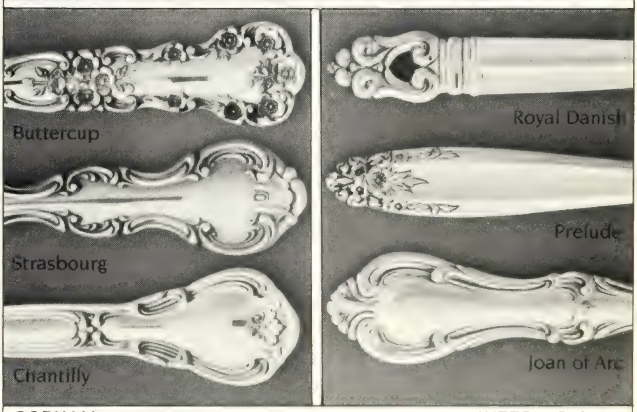


e Balcony, 1868–69, loosely drawn from Goya's *Majas on the Balcony.*

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JOURNAL







ALABASTER CITIES DIMMED BY HUMAN TEARS

Ruins and Revivals: The Architecture of Urban Devastation. The Urban Center, New York, through Nov. 3; Robeson Center Art Gallery at Rutgers, Newark, Dec. 5–Jan. 20, 1984; Stedman Art Gallery at Rutgers, Camden, N.J., Jan. 30–Mar. 3.

A powerful and painful *memento mori* of inner-city life, Camilo Vergara and Kenneth Jackson's photographs and interviews document the decline and fall of the American urban dream. Among many disturbing images is a triptych of a South Bronx apartment house, *above,* going, going, gone. More than just food for thought, this penetrating show is a prod to action. *Martin Filler*



SENSUOUS CERAMICS, BURNISHED BRONZES

Juan Hamilton: Clay & Bronze Sculpture, Museum of New Mexico, Museum of Fine Arts, Santa Fe, through Oct. 2.

Best known for his smoothly modeled black ceramic sculptures, this young artist displays a broader range in a show that includes his 1983 piece *Curve and Shadow, above.* He takes the rough edges off Minimalism with a suave and knowing skill.

PAINTING ON THE OTHER SIDE OF PARADISE



Zelda Sayre Fitzgerald, *Circus,* oil on canvas, c. 1943.

Mrs. F. Scott Fitzgerald, known to devotees of literary history simply as Zelda, was among the last of a dying breed of Southern belles and one of the first of the twenties' Lost Generation. Now, however, an exhibition organized by the Virginia Museum adds a new element to Zelda's legacy. *Painting in the South: 1564–1980* is the first effort ever made at documenting this region's contribution to American art.

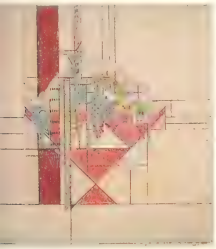
The show begins with a piece painted by a French explorer, and proceeds, through landscapes, portraits, still lifes, and genre scenes to the abstractions of artists working today. In this mix of talents and tastes, Zelda Fitzgerald's contribution, *left,* seems at home. Though painted five years before her death in 1948, she relied on a style popular during her heyday twenty years earlier. Even here, though, she departs from the norm, applying the general principles of second-generation Cubists and Fauves in an intuitive, non-systematic manner. How pleased she would have been to find herself in the company of artists and Southerners—the two worlds she loved finally in satisfying combination. *Mary Ann Tighe*

GHT'S OWN WRIGHTS: OVET, TO OWN

e Lloyd Wright and the ie School, Cooper-Hewitt eum, New York, through 31.

e Lloyd Wright: Drawings from –1959, Max Protech Gallery, York, through Oct. 14.

trouble with museums, ·ertrude Stein pointed in the days before ntic gift shops, is that can't take anything e with you. But would-Wright collectors made ous by the Cooper-ritt's spectacular show ne work of the Master his followers can head to the Max Protech ery, where an recedented sale of ght drawings is now er way. Like Picasso, ght could always pick own best work, and t many of his most arkable pieces for self. These—being sold he Frank Lloyd Wright ndation to help fund restoration of Taliesin, W's Wisconsin home—ce the Protech show an nt of uncommon itement. *M.F.*



Wright, *Liberty* magazine cover drawing, 1926–27





TAKING A LOOS LEAF FROM HISTORY

Although it was never built, one of the most memorable architectural designs of the twentieth century was Adolf Loos's losing entry in the 1922 *Chicago Tribune* Building Competition, *far left.* New York recently had an unwitting but no less riveting look-alike, *left,* as the concrete elevator shaft of the Marriott Marquis Hotel rose over Times Square. Ironically, this Doric column was soon shrouded by the superstructure of the fifty-story, $320-million project, to be completed in 1985. *M.F*

A NEW MATERIAL'S DAZZLING DEBUT

Plastic laminate has long been considered something of a déclassé relation among interior design materials, but lately the Formica Corporation has been trying to change that image. To introduce its new ColorCore laminate, Formica held an open design competition and also asked ten well-known architects and designers to create imaginative furnishings to dramatize the product's innovative quality: solid color straight through to the center.

The best include an ingenious modular office furniture system by Emilio Ambasz and Giancarlo Piretti, a small but commanding Greek Revival mirror frame by Robert Venturi, and a capsule-shaped rolling cart by Ward Bennett.



From left: Ambasz/Piretti table, Venturi mirror, Gehry lamp

But by far the most startling and unforgettable is Frank Gehry's Ryba lamp, in the shape of a fish, one of the architect's favorite recurring motifs. Rather than molding or sandwiching the ColorCore, as most of his colleagues did, Gehry impulsively broke it with his hands into small chips that became the "scales" of his surrealistic design. Set on an eye-level pedestal and lit from within, Gehry's luminous carp is nothing at all like the cute Goose lamps that have become a decorative cliché. His fish is as lively and elusive as the real creature itself. It's a real catch. *M.F.*

TWINKLE, TWINKLE LITTLE STARLET

The movie business has always been obsessed with telling its own story, and *Pictures* (PBS) presents another such celluloid tale. It's in London in 1927 when Bill Trench (Peter McEnery), a cynical screenwriter, meets Ruby Sears (Wendy Morgan), a feisty young actress who inspires him to dramatize her life story in a film called *The Movie Nut*. She is determined to be cast as herself in the lead.

What follows is an amusing portrait of early filmmaking, peopled with hilarious stereotypes from a Slavic movie director to a displaced American studio chief. However, the two leads are wonderfully real. While circumstances seem to keep them apart—her gigolo husband, his stubbornness—you root for their getting both professional success and each other. On *Masterpiece Theatre* in seven parts beginning Oct. 2.

Cable subscribers will be kept *In Good Taste* when Forrester C. Smith visits celebrities in their houses—from Bill Blass to the Countess de Rochambeau. Begins Oct. 2 on WTBS and SPN. *Gabrielle Winkel*



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Wendy Morgan as Ruby Sears



COURTESY NELSON-ATKINS MUSEUM OF ART

ART IS UP-TO-DATE IN KANSAS CITY

Ceramic Echoes: Historical References in Contemporary Ceramics. The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Mo., Oct. 15–Nov. 27

It's only fitting that a museum which prides itself on fine collections of Japanese, Chinese, and English ceramics (the latter is the largest outside of England) would mark their fiftieth anniversary with the most comprehensive exhibition of ceramics ever held in a major museum. Organized by the museum's Contemporary Art Society, the exhibition also includes pre-Columbian work and contemporary pieces such as *Pablo Ruiz with Itch, above,* Robert Arneson's playful portrait of Picasso in clay with glaze, 29½ by 22 by 22 inches. *G.W.*

WEARING YOUR ART ON YOUR SLEEVE

Art to Wear: New Handmade Clothing. The American Craft Museum II, New York, through Oct. 14. Dressing in the morning is for many people their sole creative outlet. For 25 contemporary American fiber artists, however, the making of clothing has become much more—a three-dimensional art form. The exhibit features a colorful array of quite wearable coats, tunics, and dresses that have been crocheted, woven, and quilted from materials as diverse as silk, leather, and paper. Silk satin cape, *below, Two-Faced in Mazatlan,* 1983, by Ina Kozel. *G.W.*





COURTESY BULGARI

CELEBRATING A NEW ITALIAN RENAISSANCE

Italian Re-Evolution: Design in Italian Society in the '80s, Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, through Oct. 30.

That Italy is in the forefront of good design is no news, and hasn't been for two thousand years. But change is a condition that the Italians can instinctively adapt to while retaining a sense of continuity that the modern world largely lacks. Proof of that is abundant in a stunningly eclectic collection of some six hundred objects chosen by architect Piero Sartogo, reminding us that although Italian design has moved on since the Pop-and-plastic days of the late sixties, it still adheres to principles of taste that remain constant.

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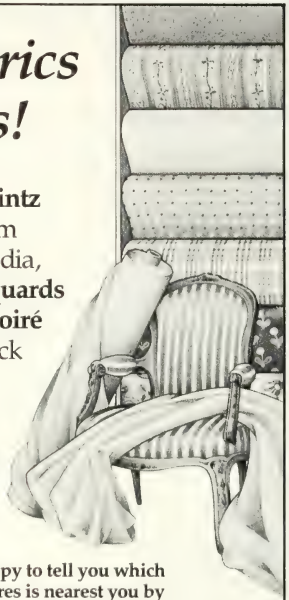
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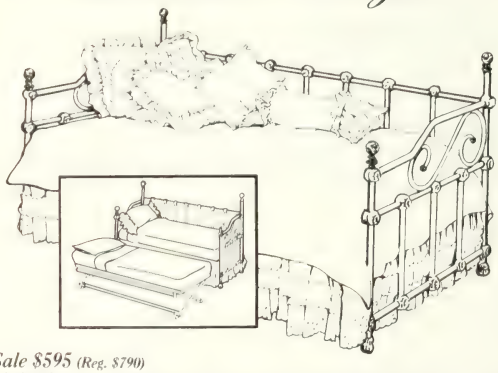
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JOURNAL

Continued from page 206

never stark, a gracefulness that is never showy. This is as true of the elegantly compact appliances of Brion-Vega as it is of the fabulous jewels of Bulgari (see one on page 206),which pioneered a new aesthetic in a field previously without much design distinction. Sartogo's broad vista of contemporary objects is in the great tradition of his country's comprehensive design exhibitions, and we in America could benefit from the same periodic inventories of our own best efforts. *M.F.*

YOUNG LOVE AS SEEN BY A POET OF SENSUALITY

Eric Rohmer's *Pauline at the Beach* is his most entertaining movie since 1970's *Claire's Knee*, a film that it resembles more than a little. *Claire's Knee* was set around the mountain lake at Annecy, and *Pauline* is set on the beaches and in the rental cottages of a Brittany coast town, but both partake of the special sunshiny, shimmering, leisured atmosphere of summer vacation. Both feature characters in their thirties as well as adoles-



Pascal Greggory and Amanda Langlet

cents. As always, in Rohmer, the subjects are sex and the discourse of sex—the way people see themselves and others, the psychology of attraction and love. Rohmer is unique because he has developed his own formal style (his special convention is super-articulate characters who are invariably deluded about themselves), yet he is also a great sensualist—really a poet of sensuality.

The Pauline of the title is a fourteen-year-old schoolgirl (Amanda Langlet), self-possessed but rather sullen, who is spending some time in Brittany with her stunningly beautiful cousin, Marion (Arielle Dombasle),

Continued on page 210

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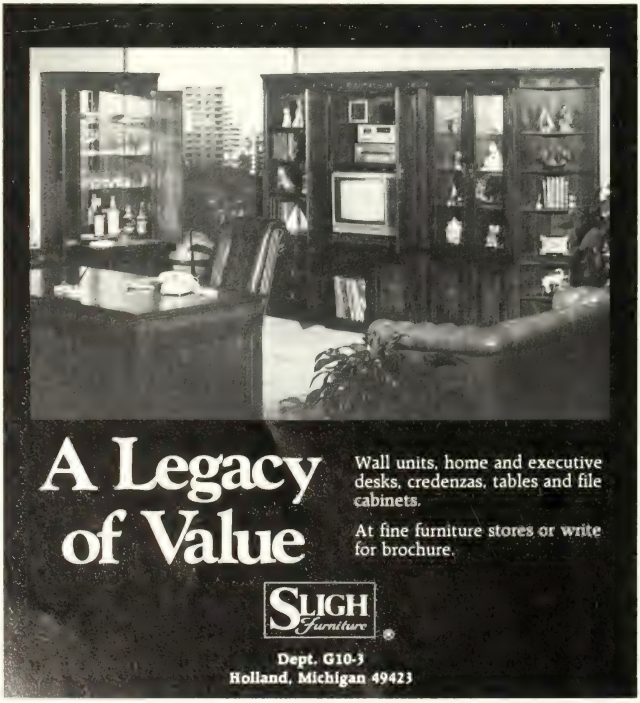
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JOURNAL

Continued from page 208

a successful Paris dress designer. On the beach, Marion meets an old lover, Pierre (Pascal Greggory), a graduate student, and an acquaintance of Pierre's, Henry (Féodor Atkine), who is older than the others, perhaps forty. Pierre, who is extremely handsome but walks around with a hang-dog expression, tries to renew his affair with Marion, but she turns him away cruelly and falls instead for Henry, an enthnologist, much traveled in the world, and a thorough-going scoundrel. Féodor Atkine, who plays Henry, is Russian-born, with a broad Slavic face and a readiness for experience that is reminiscent of a Henry Miller sexual ruffian of another era.

Marion, who has many theories about love and herself, all false, grows increasingly serious about the *louche* Henry, while the rejected Pierre skulks about, making trouble for everybody. When young Pauline meets a boy her age on the beach, Pierre, misinterpreting something he sees from a distance, gets the boy in trouble.

In part, *Pauline* is sheer farce, with couples bounding out of bed and misunderstandings, quarrels, and embarrassing confrontations. In a sex rondelet of this sort, a large part of the pleasure comes from the sheer working out of the story. But the comedy has a darker side too. Paranoia and deceit lie behind some of the stranger plot convolutions. Rohmer, always a moralist, seems to be getting at the traps of moralism as a way of perceiving reality. In *Pauline,* the habits of righteousness bring out a peculiar inaccuracy in people who are in love, whereas the amoral remain undeceived.

Rohmer's judgments are ambiguous. The manipulative rogue Henry, who lies to women (but not to himself), turns out to be a sexual democrat eager to find the most improbable girls interesting, while the priggish Pierre, who always tells the truth, shuts people out. In all, Rohmer's mixture of gravity and playfulness is unique. No one else, in our time, has turned his gaze so steadily on romantic and sexual love. This 63-year-old Catholic intellectual has turned out to be Colette's most talented and faithful heir.

David Denby

(Continued from page 122) only after he rival hostess telephoned from upstairs to ask, "Have you by any chance got my darling Emilio?"

"We used to telephone each other with stories," Terry's cousin by marriage, Prince Jean-Louis de Faucigny-Lucinge, recalls. "'Have you heard Emilio's latest?' There was always something unbelievable he'd forgotten."

Combined with extraordinary forgetfulness was his equally extraordinary memory for certain things, literature among them. He remembered every character and situation in Balzac and Dickens, and used to astound friends by reciting whole pages of Jules Verne by heart. His memory for details of architecture he liked was equally prodigious. "When I was in Saint Petersburg in 1923, I saw a staircase . . ." he might begin.

Selective though his taste was, Terry never completely shared the contempt for all things modern of his friend Charles de Beistegui, the rich Mexican connoisseur of houses who was to become his most important patron. Beistegui's snobbishness was such that he knew few people who were not, strictly speaking, in society; Terry, however, participated in the different but closely related society of artists, writers, and musicians that flourished in Paris between the wars. He was friends with—and influenced by—figures as diverse as Paul Rodocanachi, a pure eighteenth century revivalist architect, and Jean Michel Frank, the avant-garde decorator. There are affinities between Terry's early Neoclassical manner and the contemporary experiments of Picasso, Stravinsky, and Balanchine. Indeed, in 1933, Terry designed the sets for the latter's ballet, *Les Valses de Beethoven*. He was also close to many of the Surrealists and was an early champion of Dali, going so far as to contribute to a *bourse* for him. "Now he won't have to prostitute his talent," Dali's wife Gala announced in gratitude.

Terry, of course, was always spared this indignity; were this not the case, he might have built more. Instead, he sketched, in a small stenographer's notebook he usually carried or on whatever other scraps of paper might be on hand. His plans were for palaces, bridges, gardens, terraces, pavilions, and fountains," most of them unbuild- *(Continued on page 212)*

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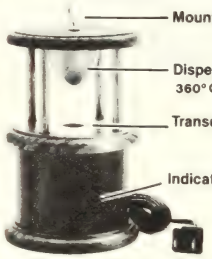
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REDESIGNING HISTORY

(Continued from page 211)

able and almost all unbuilt. A series of sketches from the thirties now in the collection of the Musée des Arts Décoratifs offers a revealing glimpse of his method of work. It consists of some thirty different house plans, starting with a *Maison Carré,* and progressing through transformations of this basic Palladian square that become ever more fanciful, sprouting curvilinear wings to assume the shapes of fans, nuns' coifs, and bats. Terry's best-known design of this period, exhibited at the epochal "Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism" show at The Museum of Modern Art in 1936, was for a *Maison Escargot.* It combines the spiral aspirations of the Baroque and Ledoux's visionary sense of pure form.

Terry's realized projects before the Second World War were few. He disappointed his friends in never building a house for himself. Instead, he preferred to make do with Rochecotte. There he encountered an atmosphere, virtually unchanged since the Duchesse de Dino's day, composed of fine eighteenth furniture and papier mâché slipper chairs, Winterhalters, and petit point. Extending his historical sympathies into the nineteenth century, he embraced all this at a time when the décor of the Louis Philippe and Second Empire periods was still considered beyond the pale by right-thinking people. In doing so, he inaugurated the fashion for *le goût anglais,* which was to become widespread after Beistegui adopted it at the Chateau de Groussay, a Neoclassical house he completely rebuilt with Terry's help. At Rochecotte, Terry had the advantage of the house's actual family history to draw upon; he supplemented it with furniture he designed in the styles of the house's several periods. "Rochecotte was *faux* nineteenth century," Gareth Windsor remarks. "Groussay was *faux faux.*"

As work began on Groussay, Terry, perhaps in reaction to Beistegui's excesses, adopted a purer and more severely classicizing manner for himself. Until the outbreak of the war, he had lived in the Paris house exactly as Boni de Castellane had left it: a curious melange of stucco trees hung with lights representing flowers and ceilings painted in the manner of Lotto. He now set about transforming the house, refurnishing it completely and building a library on the ground floor in what had been a café. His style had become markedly more traditiona Where a few years before he had to an interviewer that "what belongs Classicism in my work is the structu and not the ornament," and that h used "no cornices, no columns, and r capitals," he now had a new formul tion: "A room without a cornice is lik a man without a collar."

"If I could place Emilio's taste, fina ly, in any one period," Faucigny-Lu cinge comments, "it would be in th *late* eighteenth century." The taste in cludes a passion for mahogany and penchant for military motifs. Terr liked to refer to it, whimsically, as th "Louis XVII style," by which he mean the style that might have been if th Revolution had never taken place. I begins with the severity of the last day of the *ancien régime,* typified by th first furniture designs of Jacob, an continues through Directoire an Consulat to the early products of Em pire. It might be epitomized by th pure and utterly simple mahogan screens Terry used in his Paris house i both the main salon and the new li brary. In a frenzy of effort, he prepare more than 250 drawings for the latte room before arriving at a proportion o cornice to column to capital and a col or scheme of ebony and mahogany tha finally suited him.

No project Terry embarked on wa complete without some notable eccen tricity. In the case of his own library for the sake of proportion, he had insisted on dropping the floor several inches below ground level, creating obvious drainage problems that somehow, miraculously, were solved. He was fortunate, after the war, to meet Michel Desbrosses, a properly certified architect who could mediate between Terry's ideas and the realities of construction. Not coincidentally, this partnership inaugurated his only phase of concentrated actual building, which came in the fifties.

During this decade, apart from his continuing work for Beistegui, he built a number of examples of his preferred building type, the pavilion, including a jewellike house and garden very much in the manner of Ledoux just outside Paris. His client, who was also a particularly sympathetic and indulgent friend, remembers an instance of Terry's preternatural sense of proportion. Having painstakingly laid out the garden's central allée with powdered plaster, he then *(Continued on page 214)*

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(Continued from page 212) decided that it was a few imperceptible inches too narrow. The client and Desbrosses, counting on Terry's absent-mindedness, ignored his instructions. The next week he again insisted on the same imperceptible change. His vagueness on other subjects, the friend recalls, could be as vexing. After a morning-long discussion of, say, the dining room, he might ask suddenly, "And what will this room be used for?"

In truth—and true to his eighteenth century masters—many of his best efforts were inspired by processional rooms without specific functions, like the gallery in this house with its beautiful inlaid marble floor. Also during this period he designed an equally splendid floor for the entrance hall of the Hôtel de Chanaleilles in Paris. Built before the Revolution by the Marquis de Barbançois and later owned by the famous Madame Tallien—"the scandal, the charm, the shame, and the delight of the Directoire," to quote a contemporary memoir—the pavilion had been bought by a great collector who sought to restore its former glories. In the gallery, the magnificent floor was inherited—it had been a present to Madame Tallien from Napoleon—but Terry designed for the room some suitably grand torchères and hung wall coverings, curtains, and portières of blindingly golden Indian silk. His most complete and characteristic contribution to the house was a Greek Room designed for the owner's collection of antiquities, an homage to something like an original source of all Classical revivals: that is to say, the fifth century B.C.

If Terry had lived to see the most recent resurgence of Neoclassicism, he would have regarded it with his habitual amused tolerance, knowing that he had been there earlier. His limitations were of his own devising, and he was aware of them. It might be regretted that he never essayed anything but domestic architecture, but he was someone, after all, whose memory of home was Chenonceaux. Adding nothing to the vocabularly of architecture, he chose to enrich its syntax instead. It could be said of him—to borrow the words of the biographer of his hero Proust—that "though he invented nothing, he altered everything." □

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MAN WITH A GOLDEN EYE

(Continued from page 106) all the doo ways was standardized at eight feet an conventional doors were replaced wi plain lacquered panels fitted with t simplest door fittings straight out of catalogue. Throughout the apartmen a half-inch channel chiseled aroun door frames and along baseboards d fines a precise but unobstrusive notio of decorum.

In every room, the congenial colle tor lives easily with art that othe might find awkward. A monument Sol LeWitt floor sculpure that wou normally be installed in a much large emptier space, looks unexpected comfortable in one corner of the sittin room. "I like the idea of using mon mental sculpture in the apartment be cause it seems so improbable," observes the owner, "so I've always in sisted on having it worked into th room somehow." In the dining roon Minimal artist Brice Marden chos what some would call a heretical shad of blue for the walls on which two of h paintings were to hang after the owne described the color of a Whistler roon he had seen and admired in Scotland Stage designer Robert Wilson de signed the ensemble of furniture as "set" for eating. One or two can break fast on the marble-and-wood tabl standing like a little island by the win dow, while the rough, elemental tabl that juts into the room with its extraor dinary chairs accommodates eight lux uriously. In the library, an early twentieth-century American easel dis plays a nineteenth-century portrait o an Indian rajah one week and one o Andy Warhol's equally vivid portrait of Mao Zedong the next.

In his pursuit of the unusual, the congenial collector travels abroad to look at exhibitions, attend sales, and visit friends almost as casually as he taxies to an opening in a SoHo gallery. "The auction houses are a great place to buy," he notes, "because every week there's such a changing group of things. I think you can learn more and you can find more to buy there than any place else because there are thousands and thousands of objects every week of all descriptions and qualities. I've been going to auctions since the fifties when I was a kid. In those days, Sotheby's, which was just Parke-Bernet then, had a general sale every Saturday afternoon *(Continued on page 218)*

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(Continued from page 216) and there were unbound catalogues free in the back of the room. You could pick one up and just sit there and watch the sale and learn a lot about prices, the names of styles and materials."

When it came time to install his vast accumulation of possessions in the new apartment, he could only work with a decorator who was equally knowledgeable about interior design. Mark Hampton is described by his colleague Mark Kaminski not only as a "genius at placing furniture," but a "real historian of architecture and interior solutions, with a great knowledge of facts and dates."

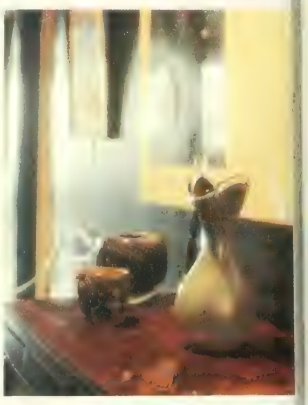
"One of Mark's special talents," adds the owner, "is to be able to work with a lot of givens. Very few decorators can do that. When I first met him he saw this place, which was half under construction, and then he came up to my other apartment, which was small with everything squashed in. It was a very different idea about how to live, and I thought it would seem like a nightmare to him." Mr. Hampton confirms that he is happier working with objects and furniture that people have had for a long time, especially when they are people with an exceptionally good eye. "What I love is that people like that consider me useful enough and flexible enough and informed enough to deal with and not be a great big millstone around their neck, always trying to sell them a sofa and a big coffee table. Or trying to upholster their walls. Characteristically, people like the owner do not like decorators. In fact, they run screaming from decorators. You know, I love working for people like that."

Though based firmly on taste and knowledge, the congenial collector's choice of furniture spanning 175 years and objects from four continents seems at times intuitive. In one case, for example, having bought the two William Kent chairs in the living room, he saw a photograph of an unattributed settee in a catalog for a Los Angeles sale. Convinced that it was by the same maker as the chairs, he bought it, only to discover after the settee had been installed that it was indeed by William Kent—the three pieces had originally come from the same London dealer and he had reunited them.

There is a third element that guides him in his choices, what Mark Hamton refers to in discussing his own w of working as a "daydream" of the fi ished room. Of course, one of the ple sures of daydreams is that they a never precise, and the daydream vari from day to day. "What keeps roor like this looking so wonderful is th fact that they have a certain amount change going on all the time," says M Hampton.

The rooms will continue to chan as the congenial collector continues acquire art and furniture and objec that please him wherever he finds the and continues to move them about ar experiment with the space in his apar ment under a lot of different circun stances. Proof, if it is needed, that h chooses what he likes and not what h ought to like is offered by an Italia Empire chair in the library. The own reckons it is one of his oldest posse sions, discovered at Lord & Tayl about 20 years ago. Perfectly at hom among so many rare and beautiful ob jects, it is, of all things, a Spanish repr duction made specially for the store.

Meanwhile, always in sight from a most every spot in the apartment, th East River keeps moving and, afte dark, passing traffic leaves trace streams of red taillights, rather like dazzling artwork specially commis sioned to appear nightly for the plea sure of the congenial collector and hi delighted guests. □ *Produced by Kaare Parker Gray*

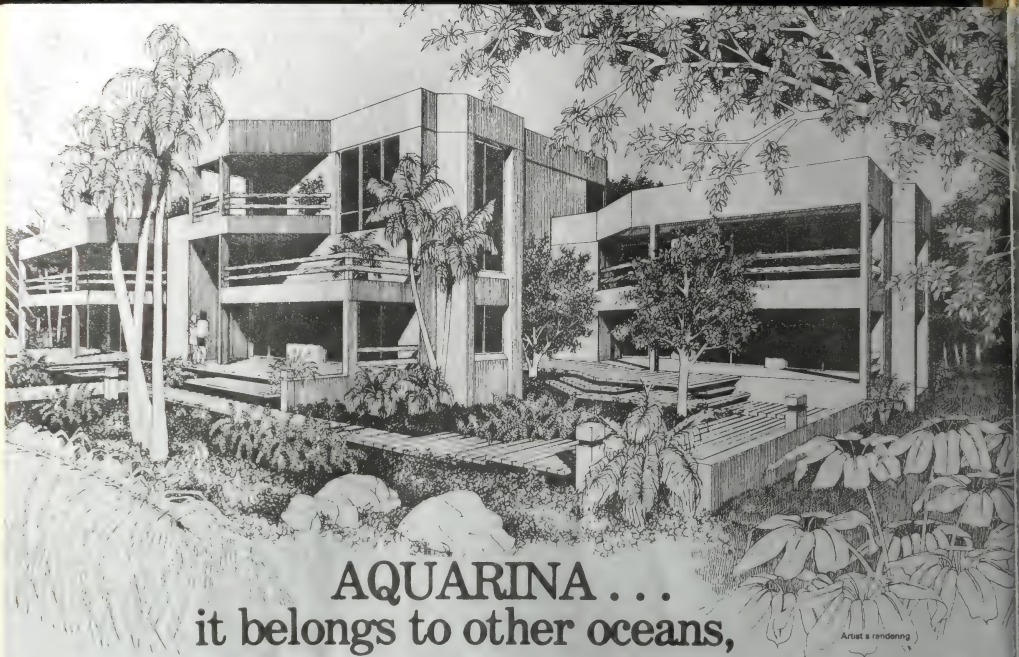


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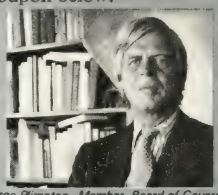
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UNCLE SAM'S BELIEVE IT OR NOT

Amazing facts from the 1980 Census

By Andrew Hacker

The 1980 census counted 80,378,283 homes in the United States, up from 63,446,641 in 1970. This amounted to a 26.7 percent increase, more than twice the population's growth, and the sharpest residential rise since the turn of the century. Here are some housing highlights from the Census, whose returns are now being released:

Of America's residential units, 64.4 percent are owned by their occupants, and 35.5 percent are rented. Among married couples, 79.2 percent are owners, as are 44.8 percent of persons living by themselves.

The Census asked each person filling in its form to state how many automobiles, vans, or trucks "are kept at home for use by members of your household." The findings: 35.7 percent had one such vehicle; 33.8 percent had two, and 17.7 percent had three or more. The remaining 12.8 percent apparently made do with other means of locomotion.

At the time the 1980 Census was taken, 547,100 Americans were away from their "usual residence," most of them in second homes. The states having the most part-time residents were: Florida (252,554), California (43,056), Arizona (39,170), Texas (24,765), and New York (20,353).

From 1970 to 1980, the states with the greatest housing growth were: Nevada, with a 96.8 percent increase in its number of units; Arizona, 89.5 percent; Alaska, 78.8 percent, Florida, 73.1 percent; and Wyoming, 62.2 percent.

The states showing the least growth were: Pennsylvania, only 17.1 percent more units; Illinois, 16.6 percent; Massachusetts, 16.8 percent; New Jersey, 16.0 percent; and New York, last on the list, with 9.0 percent.

Also, during the decade, the average number of residents per unit fell from 3.11 to 2.75, reflecting fewer children and more people living by themselves. Average household size in 1980 was the highest in Hawaii (3.15 persons), followed by Mississippi (2.97), and South Carolina and Alaska (both 2.93). Bringing up the list were Oregon (2.60 residents per average unit), Nevada (2.59), and Florida (2.55).

HOUSING AND HOUSEHOLDS: THEY GO TOGETHER

The decade's housing growth reflected an increase in the number of households, which rose from 63,449,747 to 80,376,609, also 26.7 percent from 1970 to 1980. The Census puts households in two general categories. The first consists of families, which can be married couples (with or without children) or other groups of related persons living together. The second Census category ("non-family households") includes individuals living alone and non-related persons sharing quarters.

The ten years from 1970 to 1980 saw not only a sharper increase in the number of households, but also marked changes in how they are arranged:

	1970	198
FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS	81.2%	73.9%
Married Couples—		
with children	38.8%	31.1%
without children	31.7%	29.8%
Single Parents		
with Children	5.7%	7.6%
Other Family Groupings	5.0%	5.4%
NON-FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS	18.8%	26.1%
Persons living alone	17.1%	22.5%
Two Persons Sharing	1.4%	2.9%
Three or More Persons Sharing	0.3%	0.7%
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%

The Census also reports that fewer married couples have children, those who do have fewer. In 1970, among two-parent families with offspring at home, 36.9 percent had three or more. By 1980, the proportion with that number had declined to 23.3 percent.

In 1980, there were almost eighteen million persons living alone, an increase of seven million over 1970, accounting for forty percent of the decade's household growth. Here are the individuals who make up this group:

Widowed Women	34.9%
Single Men	17.4%
Divorced and Separated Men	14.6%
Single Women	14.2%
Divorced and Separated Women	12.7%
Widowed Men	6.2%
TOTAL	100.0%

Among the 2.3 million households consisting of two unrelated adults, 25.0 percent were two men sharing; 19.2 percent were two women; and 55.8 percent had housemates of different genders. In the latter group, close to a third—31.5 percent—had children living with them. □

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In cooking, the seasons are *our* luxury and the peasant's discipline. The satisfactions of a *pot au feu* served up in a country inn on a fall night are the satisfactions of relentless, unpretentious practicality

(Continued from page 180) is a kind of moral sustenance to country food, and maybe, too, why we romanticize it. A gift like Berthe's rabbit was exotic because it broke the rules of economy and calm that discipline French country cooking. It was a potlatch gesture, a rite of excess, like a peasant wedding feast or a communion lunch. It involved us all in extravagance and meaning, and it made me realize how much the ordinary kitchen skills of the women in the Vaucluse moved me, like embroidery on homespun. There was a big stone bread oven in the middle of the village. It was built in the fourteenth or fifteenth century, and for hundreds of years all the women in the village used it, but now it was, if not the property, the prerogative of one woman who specialized in making *fougasse*, which is what Vaucluse people call their chewy, golden local bread, twisting and turning and carving itself into spiky circles or odd loops according to the baker's temperament and talent. Our baker knew more about bread than anyone I ever met. She could tell you what happened to dough when the mistral blew. She could compare the taste of a fougasse that had cooled on an August day with the taste of a fougasse that had cooled at night in February. She knew what happened to a rising loaf when the three village witches passed her oven carrying the balls of copper wire they used for hexes and festivities. And she knew all about wood. Mondays (which was the day the village shops closed) she scavenged in the country, collecting branches. On Tuesday mornings, her shed was always piled with sticks and scraps of fruitwood and pine and hawthorne, and she would be squatting on the floor, in the middle of the shed, blending sticks as if she were blending teas and sniffing the air until she got it right. Each batch of her bread carried its own special fragrance through the village. It flavored the day. It meant that we collected the memories of the day with our bread and took them home with us. Our *boulangère* dealt, thus, in epiphanies. The best lamb I ever had was a gigot roasted in the kitchen fireplace to her instructions, over a bed of hawthorne and cherry branches spiked with rosemary.

I got the cherry branches in the valley. My husband and I had been going down to the valley every day for a week to pick cherries for friends who had a small orchard, and the cherrywood-roasted gigot was by way of a celebration for *(Continued on page 226)*

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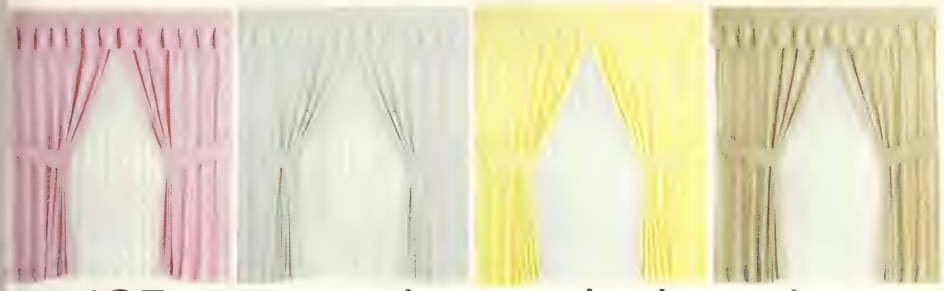
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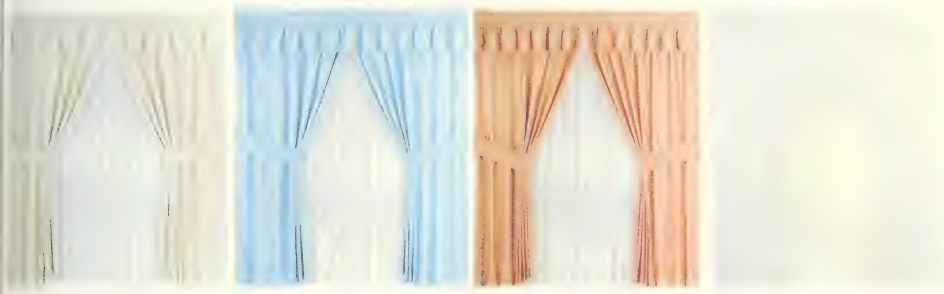
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FRENCH COOKING

(Continued from page 224) finishin the job. Cherry picking is hard, borin work. Most of the local farmers got ou of it by hiring gypsies, who made th rounds of the Vaucluse at cherry-pick ing time, looking for day work. Ou own friends were not farmers. The were painters who had built a glas house on the foundations of a burnec out mas, and the farmers considere them peculiar—not because the painted pictures called *Prague Sprin* or *Mai '68* but because they grew thei vegetables and chopped their woo and lived in the hot valley instead of u the mountain in a proper bourgeois vil lage house and, unlike the farmers seemed to like it. Actually, by the tim we lived in the village, our friends— Alain and Claude—were beginning t agree with the farmers. Alain took t driving to the village every afternoo and having his *pastis* at the café an then joining the rest of the men fo *boules* til dinnertime, and Claude start ed shopping once a week at the super market in Abt, like the village wives But they did not have the money to pay gypsies to pick their cherries, and i was against their politics to exploit gypsies anyway. They exploited thei friends. A few days into the cherry sea son, we had lunch with them. There were big brown pottery bowls of vege table soup, with plenty of leeks and ba-



Languedoc sea life includes Bouvigues oysters, sea potatoes, tiny clams, cockles, and *escargots de mers*.

and garlic. There was a crusty
igasse and a sheep's cheese from
non and a couple of bottles of Gi-
ndas, and, of course, the first cher-
s of the season. After lunch, Alain
d Claude headed for their orchard
more cherries. We went along and
tched them work, feeling useless
d a little restless, until they let us
lp. I remember what a nice breeze
re was that afternoon—and that we
re feeling accommodating because
the good lunch and the Gigondas.
ople who have picked cherries know
it at first it is a game and then an ob-
sion. You climb a broken ladder to
to the last cherry on the highest
anch of the tallest tree. You reach for
cherry until you fall off the ladder.
ou climb back up again. The point is
at you cannot bear to leave the cherry
the tree. By the time we drove home
at afternoon, we must have passed
e game stage and entered the obses-
n stage, because we had seen our
ends off to Paris for some exhibi-
ns, and had promised to bring in
eir cherries for them. It took a week.
y husband and I would start picking
rly in the morning, and we would
ck on through the heat of the day and
ver seem to get anywhere.

At night, in the kitchen, we ate cher-
s until our stomachs ached and pit-
d cherries until our fingers bled. We
led bottles of *eau-de-vie* with cher-
es, marking them with the name of
ery friend in New York who might
ppreciate a true Vaucluse *bocal* for
aristmas that year. Finally, I went to
bt and bought a Provençal cookbook
ith a bunch of cherries on the cover.
turned out to have been written by a
oup of Provence nationalists who
ere trying to introduce Provençal—*la
ngue d'Oc*—as the official language
the region, which they insisted on
lling Occitanie. And, of course, it
as in Provençal. I had to drive to the
niversity of Aix to find someone who
ould translate the cherry recipes into
rench for me, but once I did I had a
ne time making cherry *clafoutis* and
erry tarts and a cherry and semolina
udding that ranks with Elizabeth Da-
id's "Suliman's pilaf" as the most
othing dish I know. The only prob-
m with my pudding is that late June
—which is when most people are apt to
ave the cherries—is not the best time
or a bowl *(Continued on page 228)*



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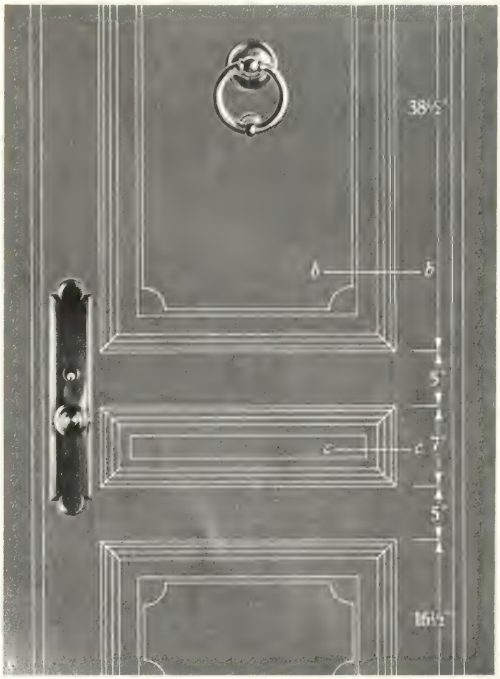
ROBERT PERSON

At the harbor of Sète, Languedoc, the nets of a commercial fisherman have been left on the dock after a day's fishing in the Mediterranean.

(Continued from page 227) of sweet, steaming semolina. We ate it anyway, at breakfast, when the day was fresh.

The recipe I have today that is most like it is an Italian recipe, and does not happen to include cherries, but actually any semolina pudding recipe will do as long as it involves sifting semolina into boiling milk, adding sugar, butter, eggs, and cherries, and baking slowly in a bain-marie.

Everybody in the village made some sort of pudding with the extra cherries that summer. The difference between my pudding and the villagers' was mainly that the village women left the pits in their cherries, and eating one of them was an experience punctuated by the soft, whistling sound of neighbors spitting pits into neat little piles beside their pudding bowls. Then I stopped pitting cherries, too. I was exhausted by cherries. It is hard to describe my relief when the only cherries left in the house were in bottles of eau-de-vie, standing on the kitchen mantel. When fall came and the men went into the woods for thrush, I invited Alain and Claude for dinner and talked them into the awful job of grinding thrush bones into fine grit for a season's worth of *pâtés grives*. □



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Isozaki was taught that Japan's new architecture ought to reinterpret ancient structural forms in modern materials

ontinued from page 141) proponent the idea that Japan's new architecre ought to reinterpret ancient struc-ral forms in modern materials, pecially the unfinished reinforced ncrete that became the favorite beuse of its richly sculptural properties. ɔzaki worked under Tange for ten ars, first as a student and then in his chitectural office, and it was through m that the young architect received s first independent commission at the ecocious age of 28. It was for a medi-l building in his hometown of Oita, ıd its raw but expressive Brutalist rms show the mark of both Isozaki's aster and of Le Corbusier, whose arıitecture of the fifties made a pround impression on the Japanese. Durg the next few years Isozaki received veral more important commissions ı Kyushu, and these earliest works ill possess a liveliness and audacity at are more pronounced than their vkwardness and lack of resolution.

In 1963 Isozaki set up his own studio Tokyo, and his first years as an indeɛndent architect coincided with Jaın's astounding industrial recovery ıd its rise as a major economic power. ne tangible symbol of the country's renewed status as a member of the world community was Expo '70, held in Osaka at the dizzying height of Japan's prosperity and optimism. Isozaki designed the fair's Festival Plaza, a massive space frame that sheltered an eye-popping assortment of robots for a bravura demonstration of Japan's unparalleled technological prowess. But both for Japan and Isozaki, Expo '70 turned out to be the end of an era rather than its zenith.

Shortly before his fortieth birthday, Isozaki entered the midlife crisis that seems especially common among architects. His professional doubts and personal problems (including two failed marriages; he has two teen-aged sons from the second) were sharply accentuated by the social upheaval that rocked Japan in the late sixties and early seventies no less than it did the United States. Greatly affected by the student movement that decried the heedless commercialization of Japan, Isozaki took a six-month hiatus that resulted in a striking redirection of his designs when he took up architecture again. Evidence of the change was first seen in a series of banks in and around the city of *(Continued on page 230)*



The Waseda Sho-Gekijo Toga Sanbo Theater in the Japan Alps (page 131) is one of Isozaki's most traditional designs. The amphitheater, foreground, seats 600.

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(Continued from page 229) Fukuoka on Kyushu, where Isozaki had moved his practice from Tokyo in 1969. The exuberant and often overwhelming masses of his pre-1970 buildings were replaced with cool, rational grids defining volumes reminiscent of the works of the contemporary American Minimalist sculptors Sol LeWitt and Donald Judd. Order, proportion, and harmony became the hallmarks of Isozaki's new style, and it began to attract attention abroad as an elegantly abstracted reinterpretation of classical Japanese architecture's modular simplicity. In 1972 he returned to Tokyo, and his career has been on a steady upward path ever since.

Stunning proof of Isozaki's triumphant reemergence was presented in his design for the structure that remains his most famous building, the Gunma Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts in Takasaki, completed in 1974 (see pages 136–137). Almost a decade later it is widely appreciated as one of



The Tsukuba Dai Ichi Hotel at the Tsukuba Civic Center (pages 135, 232).

Japan's finest postwar buildings, a demonstration that museum architecture need not be completely self-effacing to function sympathetically as a background for art. Although its aluminum-panel and glass cladding give it an unmistakably modern feeling, it can also be seen as an essentially Japanese composition. Especially eloquent is the museum's wing for Japanese art, a raised pavilion that juts out at an oblique angle from the main building and is set in a reflecting pool that calls to mind the famous eleventh-century Phoenix Hall at Byodo-in, outside Kyoto. Inside, the museum has all the flexibility of display space needed for a contemporary art gallery in an age of traveling exhibitions and rapidly changing tastes.

In 1974 Isozaki completed another seminal work, his Fujimi Country Clubhouse in Oita, in which he used one of his most important motifs for the first time. It is the barrel vault, a form unknown in traditional Japanese architecture, that has become Isozaki's prime symbol of the home (see pages 142–143) and of buildings that function like a house. Although taken from the Western Neoclassical tradition that began with Palladio in the sixteenth century, the barrel vault has become a particularly Japanese convention since Isozaki began using it: now no fewer than thirty imitations of his vaulted houses can be glimpsed from the *Shinkansen* ("Bullet Train") between Tokyo and Osaka.

But at the Fujimi Country Clubhouse there is also more than initially meets the eye, an added double meaning that is typical of the playful ambiguity Isozaki likes to give his work. The visitor can see that the building makes an unusually extravagant curve and might wonder about the placement of a round planter in the parking lot, smack in front of the entrance canopy. Then the dawning comes: the building is in the shape of a question mark, the planter the "dot" beneath it. If this is the answer, then (as Gertrude Stein is said to have asked on her deathbed) what is the question? Various explanations have been offered, the most amusing being why would the Japanese want to take up such a strange Western pastime as golf? For his part, Isozaki blandly maintains that the shape "was based on a functional analysis of circulation patterns of the golfers through the clubhouse . . . naturally resulting in this question-mark shape." But would he have found that golfers in Houston make a path in the shape of a dollar sign? Bankers there do: one Houston bank is in the form of a stylized dollar sign.

With his mark made at home, Isozaki first came to the attention of the American art public in 1976 when his *Angel Cage* and *Gravity Room* became the runaway hit of the Cooper-Hewitt Museum's *(Continued on page 232)*

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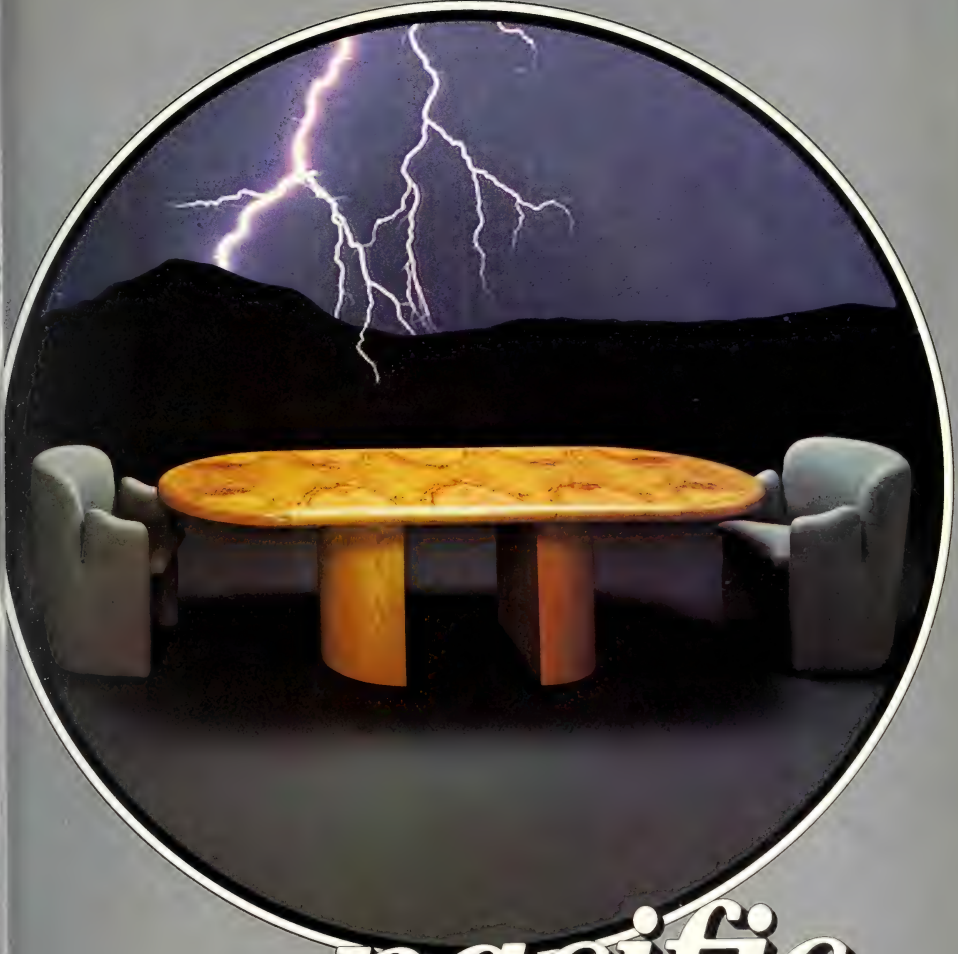
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Above: Portal at Tsukuba was inspired by eighteenth-century French architect C.-N. Ledoux. *Below:* Table in Hauserman showroom (page 141) is surrounded by Isozaki's Marilyn Monroe chairs; their undulating backs pay homage to the actress's contours.

(Continued from page 230) inaugur
MANtransFORMS exhibition in Ne
York. Asked to design a gallery for th
museum's extensive collection of bir
cages, Isozaki lined the walls of th
room with photographs of trees (muc
like those in Central Park outside) sh
through metal bars to give the viewe
the sensation of being inside a cage,
metaphor underscored by a life-siz
cage he designed to hold a sculpture
a dazzling winged angel of the Annun
ciation via Fra Angelico. It was an i
triguing conception that firml
implanted itself in the minds of coun
less visitors who still recall the artwor
if not the name of its maker. His secon
big Cooper-Hewitt success was hi
1979 show MA, *Space/Time in Japan*
one of the most successful attempt
ever to explain Japanese architectura
concepts to a Western audience.

Isozaki's growing internationa
presence has been greatly increase
since he married Aiko Miyawaki, i
1973. A well-established artist with ex
tensive connections in Europe (she wa
a friend of such legendary figures a
Marcel Duchamp, Man Ray, and Han
Richter), she has widened Isozaki's ho
rizons considerably and has promote
her husband's work with sagacity an
conviction; her astuteness and intelli
gence must be counted as one of his
most valuable assets.

By the late seventies Arata and Aiko
had become familiar faces among the
new architectural jet-set, a group of
twenty or so (including England's
James Stirling, Austria's Hans Hollein,
and America's Charles Moore and
Richard Meier) that materializes sever-
al times a year at this conference, that
awards ceremony, or yet another open-
ing, picking up with one another where
they left off last time as though there'd
been no interruption at all since Venice
or Berlin or Charlottesville.

At home, they are familiar with the
leading lights of Japan's creative life, from
the fashion *(Continued on page 234)*

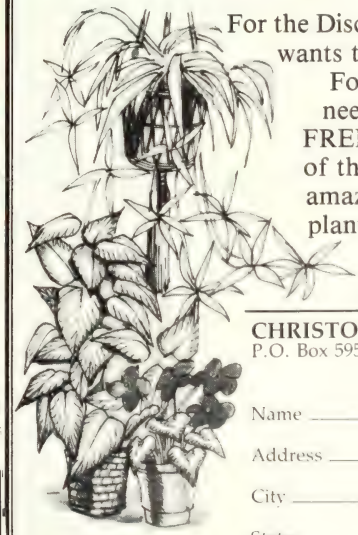


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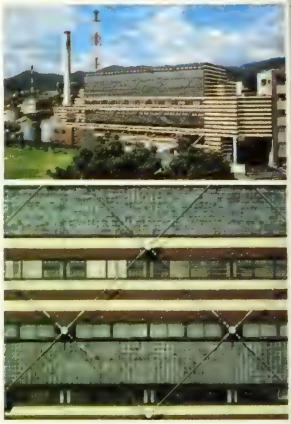
Above: Portal at Tsukuba was inspired by eighteenth-century French architect C.-N. Ledoux. *Below:* Table in Hauserman showroom (page 141) is surrounded by Isozaki's Marilyn Monroe chairs; their undulating backs pay homage to the actress's contours.



THE ART OF ISOZAKI

(Continued from page 232) designer I sey Miyake (whose innovative cloth both Arata and Aiko wear most ofte and for whom Isozaki is now designin a country house) to the distinguishe *sushi* chef from whom the architect taking lessons in that precise and e acting art. Their home is an apartmer in central Tokyo not far from Isozaki office, but Arata and Aiko Isozaki ca be said to live most completely in place defined by much more than fou walls and a roof.

America, of course, remains the ult



Top: Isozaki's Nippon Electric Glass Co. building in Otsu. *Above:* Wall detail.

mate test for any artist of internationa ambitions—as true for architects as fo pianists or painters—and Isozaki's work here thus far has demonstrated both his talent and his tenacity. His first American job was a showroom for The E.F. Hauserman Company in the Merchandise Mart in Chicago, completed last year (see pages 141 and 232). Faced with the problem of designing a selling space for a product that is not actually displayed there (Hauserman manufactures office wall systems that are devised for each client's needs), Isozaki was asked instead to create a strong design identity for the company, which was in sore need of one. He did it brilliantly, producing a sequence of spaces that avoid the gimmickry increasingly common in the current vogue for "designer" interiors showrooms. It is a serene atmosphere that subliminally reinforces the idea

at the client is serious about good design, and a more effective sales tool for hard-to-influence audience can arcely be imagined.

A less salutary story is that of Isoza-'s experiences with the Los Angeles luseum of Contemporary Art commission (see page 134). Having won ut over such heavyweight competion as Frank Gehry, Edward Larrabee arnes, Kevin Roche, Richard Meier, nd James Stirling, Isozaki found the rize to be a decidedly mixed blessing, scheme after scheme that he proosed was rejected by the project's eal-estate developers and the muse-m's architecture and design committe. A most complicated and unappezing series of events ensued, fraught ith petty politics, conflicting interts, and increasing bad faith on all des. Finally—and after seriously condering resigning—Isozaki came up ith a version that won approval. He laims he lost count, but one of his asociates says it was his 36th try. The OCA project is one of the few topics at can make the normally imperturble Isozaki visibly upset. "That was hen he learned to show anger," explains a young colleague in Japan, here such displays are uncommon, dding, "He had to."

Although Isozaki began to receive nportant commissions at a relatively arly age, his most recently completed ork is by far his most extensive. Offiially opened last June, the Tsukuba ivic Center (see pages 135, 230, and 32) was conceived as a kind of culturl magnet to draw inhabitants to a new atellite city forty miles northeast of okyo, part of a master plan to decenralize that mammoth megalopolis, the orld's third largest city. Until now, he attempt has been a dismal failure, ith only 30,000 people having moved o the new town, originally intended to old 120,000. One of the major reaons why Tsukuba could not attract nore residents was its lack of a town enter and any cultural facilities of ote, and Isozaki was asked to design a nultiuse complex (comprising a conert hall, exhibition galleries, shops, estaurants, a hotel, and a plaza) that would give Tsukuba a real urban focus.

Only the public's response will tell whether or not he has truly succeeded n terms of city planning, but as architecture the *(Continued on page 236)*

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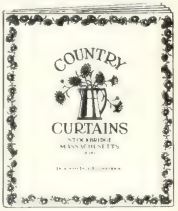
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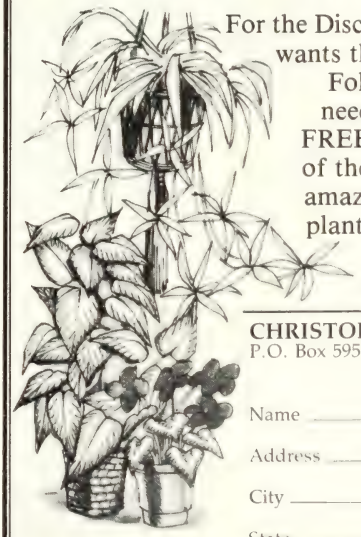
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THE ART OF ISOZAKI

(Continued from page 235) Tsukuba Civic Center is somewhat of a disappointment. Isozaki's greatest strength has been his genius for cultural immersion and stylistic coalescence. The major reason why he has been able to become one of the most credible voices for a world architecture of the future is his ability to avoid the restrictive and embrace the universal; this the Tsukuba design does not do. In quoting too extensively from the architecture of other times or other places—Michelangelo's Campidoglio in Rome, Claude-Nicolas Ledoux's Royal Salt Works in Chaux, France, and Charles Moore's Piazza d'Italia in New Orleans, among others—it fails to give Tsukuba its own unique flavor, accentuating rather than resolving the town's identity crisis. Perhaps it is not more than harmless fun, and certainly not terribly jarring in a society that abounds with incongruous juxtapositions often far more startling than any to be found in the United States at its most grotesquely philistine. In any case, the Tsukuba Civic Center is still a demonstration of a sensibility actively searching for new directions, and it does not seriously diminish the likelihood that Isozaki will reassert the independence of vision that has brought him as far as he has come.

Arata Isozaki is now poised on the allegro movement of his career, the long-awaited point at which an architect's talents can at last be given full rein by the wider appreciation of his abilities. Isozaki's achievement thus far has been impressive to an extent unmatched by most of his contemporaries, and his place in the architecture of our times is already firmly established. How well and for how long he can consolidate his position and expand his influence is the only real question, even as we in America begin to appreciate the admirable body of work he has produced in the years before he reached our own cultural awareness.

The great Japanese master of the tea ceremony, Kakuzo Okakura, once wrote, "In religion the Future is behind us. In art the Present is eternal." Isozaki's architecture promises to remain in the perpetual present, which explains why he is a living cultural treasure not only to his own country, but also to the world at large. □ *Produced by Elizabeth Sverbeyeff Byron*

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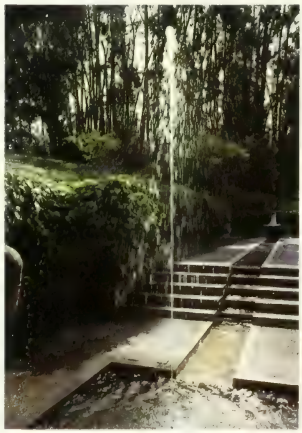
THE OUTBACK TRANSPLANTED

Its giant tree ferns and eucalyptuses have taken root in California

By Andrew Pfeiffer

Australia is still a country with broad, virgin forests that meet the sea on a largely unspoiled coastline. And the Australian *bush*—as the native forest is more commonly called—exercises a powerful and inescapable charm upon those who have been born to it.

The mountains, worn down over millions of years to gentle and rounded shapes, are clad in forests of eucalyptuses, or gum trees, which from the distance, and in the brilliance of the Australian sunlight, stand out as blue against the horizon. The trees themselves can assume a twisted and distorted form that often seems a caricature of the human body itself, while the leaves, paradoxically enough, are of a drab iron green-gray that catch the light with metallic lack of passion. But the smell of the bush, particularly on a hot day, is strong and invigorating. This is the smell of eucalyptus oil that in the intense heat of bush fires literally explodes, causing horrific destruction.

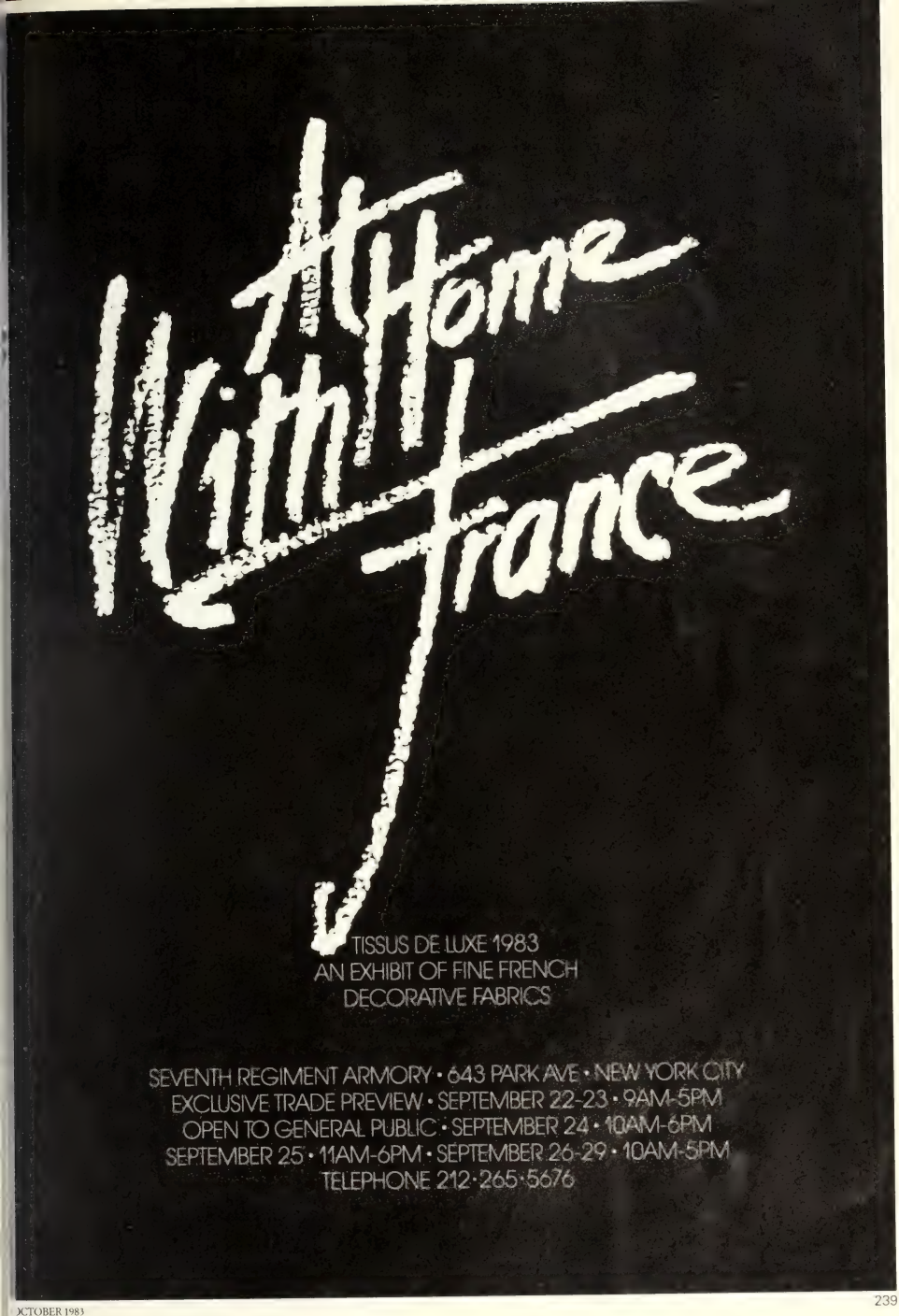


Top: Eucalyptuses behind the pool in a Hillsborough, California, garden designed by Lawrence Halprin and Thomas Church. *Above:* Water stairs feed into the pool.

Forests of eucalyptus, however, d not by themselves constitute the Aus tralian bush, for the bush, in all it manifestations, shows an extraordi nary range and variety of plant life.

Primeval tree ferns live in valley formed by the folds of mountain where there is a rushing stream to cre ate a cool and humid atmosphere. Th tree ferns, many as tall as small trees create fantastic forests full of mysteri ous green light filtering through th canopy of their fronds, which so re semble parasols, to cast specks o quicksilver sunlight on the dark valle floor.

Tree ferns also live in the tropica rain forests of the coastal fringes o northern Australia. These forests, oc cupying a minuscule fraction of th area of Australia, are perhaps the great est miracle of life in this dry continent From the air you will only see the billow ing, massive crowns of the tallest trees which give the *(Continued on page 240)*


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(Continued from page 238) appearance of a boiling sea. But beneath this surface the stratified layers of trees and vines struggling for sunlight have a richness of color, variation of texture, and luxuriance of shape that throws this landscape into sharp contrast with all others in Australia. And the delirious pulse of animal and bird life in the rain forests, too, is at odds with the silences of the inland.

The landscape of central Australia is so heroic in its proportions that in order to be placed in perspective it must be seen from the air as well as from the ground. The abstract fluid patterns of Lake Ayre, hundreds of miles in breadth and constantly changing according to season and to the vagaries of rainfall, can be properly appreciated only from the stratosphere. When it rains hundreds of miles away in the Channel Country of central Queensland Lake Ayre fills up, fed by, among others, the broad-banked and itinerant Diamantina River. Minerals will ooze from the earth's crust beneath the surface of the lake, causing stains that are perhaps fifteen miles in length but which, from the air, look no more than a large drop of iodine in a shallow glass of water.

Seen from the ground this landscape is no less heroic. Four hundred miles northwest of Lake Ayre, Ayers Rock—at six miles in circumference one of the greatest monoliths on earth—rises 1,100 feet from the desert floor in awe-inspiring defiance of the flat horizon with a silent majesty and splendor that takes the breath away. Elsewhere other huge stone formations, also of the same deep red of Ayers Rock, provide a dramatic foil for the Outback's most extraordinary tree, the ghost gum. These trees are so named for their weirdly shaped white trunks that stand out with startling definition on moonlit nights. The fact that any tree at all can survive the harshness of this climate is extraordinary.

Early European settlers were horrified by these Australian landscapes they found so alien, horrified not only by the appearance of the bush but also by the haunting and mysterious midday and nighttime silences that pervade it. These silences can be terrifying to the uninitiated: terrifying because it is as if the bush had an animated life and spirit of its own going back over eons of time, and the intruder can fe that he is being watched with an it tensely patient and pitiless stare. Pe ple will innocently wander off for wha is to be a ten-minute amble through th bush, like the girls in the film *Picnic Hanging Rock,* and never be see again. Such occurrences happen all th time in Australia, but usually wit those who are new to the bush and wh do not comprehend its ways.

Little wonder, then, that the earl settlers felled the bush and, by way c reassuring themselves, planted oak elms, and pine trees with a fervor tha seems wickedly destructive to mos thinking Australians today. Encircle by privet hedges and with prim littl rose gardens, their houses, scattere widely over this vast continent, loo like the suburban villas of Victoria London in the most wildly unlikely set tings imaginable.

It is only recently that people in Aus tralia have developed a far-reachin and widespread love for the native for est and have started to use its plants t any considerable extent in their gar dens. Landscape designers, too, ar turning to the bush for inspiration as t how groups of plants might be best as sembled, and how the moods of the bush might be evoked.

One of the first landscape designers, however, to use native Australian plants widely in his gardens, and with great success, was not an Australian, but a Californian called Thomas Church, who started making gardens in San Francisco fifty years ago. He was also the first designer to make wide timber decks, as opposed to verandas, for outdoor entertaining areas and he pioneered the idea of breaking down the traditional dichotomy between house and garden, making it easier to get from one to the other. His ideas on landscaping gardens for twentieth-century houses have had a world-wide impact, and he is considered by many as one of the greatest garden makers of the century.

Church's use of Australian plants was made easier than it would have been in perhaps any other part of the United States because of the similarities in climate between Australia and California. Australian plants thrived there. Eucalyptuses, had, in any event, been grown in California as windbreaks and *(Continued on page 242)*

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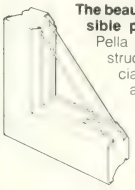
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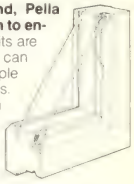


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The Outback's most extraordinary tree, the Ghost Gum, is named for its weirdly shaped white trunk that stands out with startling definition on moonlit nights



The strange forms and textures of Australian gum trees and desert plants such as these have been much sought after for California gardens.

(Continued from page 240) for timber since the 1850s. So popular did they become that they are now the most widely planted non-native tree in California and Arizona. You can drive for hundreds of miles in California today without losing sight of a eucalyptus.

Church was fond of using these trees, especially the blooming ones that don't grow too large, like *Eucalyptus ficifolia,* and he would plant these for effect among other trees in stands away from the house, and along driveways. Apart from their flowers, he was attracted to eucalyptus because of the possibilities for contrast that the texture of their bark held, and also because of the interesting patterns their branches made.

He also used the Victorian box, *Pittosporum undulatum,* a great deal for its haunting scent in springtime and for the interesting texture of its large, shiny leaves. This plant becomes a large shrub, or small tree, on maturity and is seldom used for landscaping purposes in Australia. Indeed, it is largely considered a weed there. This is because in Australia you hardly ever find a *Pittosporum undulatum* leaf unchewed by insects or unaffected by disease. In California, because the plants were imported by seed, it is extremely rare to see a *Pittosporum* leaf that has been attacked by insects.

Perhaps the Australian plant that Church most enjoyed using was the tree fern. This he planted in shady areas, under the protective canopy of other trees, and usually in conjunction with other shade-loving plants like camellias and rhododendrons. The snakelike trunk and the frond of tree ferns create an exotic effect that the other plants are incapable of producing when not in flower.

A former student of Thomas Church, Lawrence Halprin, has also created some spectacular gardens in California using Australian plants. There is a garden in Hillsborough, only three miles from the San Francisco airport, that both Halprin and Church worked on at different times; it is situated in the middle of a forest of mature blue gums, *Eucalyptus Globulus.*

These tall trees with straight trunks and heavy masses of foliage are the backdrop to an extraordinarily dra matic water garden sculpted in con crete, and in which water tha originates from two fountains flows t a swimming pool by way of "wate stairs" and small channels. Althoug the design of the garden is inspired b the Moorish water gardens of Spain the trees that are used are largely Aus tralian. Beneath the blue gums grow large numbers of mimosa, *Acacia Bai leyana,* and next to the house is a very large *Pittosporum undulatum,* used fo shade in summer and beneath which are placed tables and chairs.

Despite his love of all Australian plants and his instinctive sympathy toward them, Church was inspired only by the plants themselves and not by the Australian bush from which they came. Sadly, he never visited Australia, and it is interesting to speculate on how it might have influenced his Californian gardens had he ever done so. It is also interesting to speculate on how its extraordinary plants, its moods and silences, and its timeless grandeur will continue to influence the gardens of the future. □


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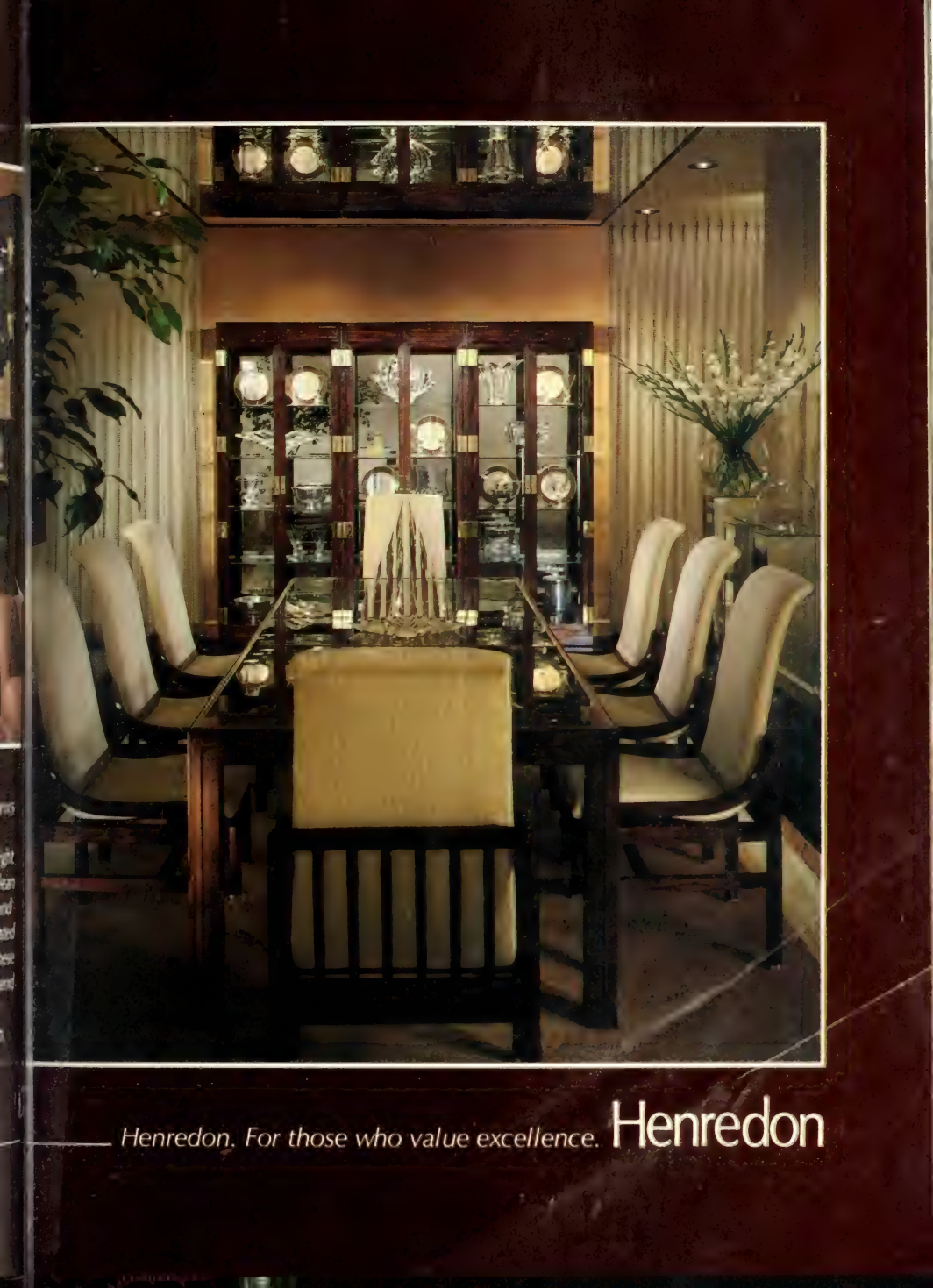


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November 1983

HOUSE & GARDEN

THE MAGAZINE OF CREATIVE LIVING
Volume 155, Number 11

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THE EDITOR'S PAGE

We always look forward to the contributions of M. F. K. Fisher to this magazine, but none has given me as much pleasure as the excerpt from *Among Friends* included in this issue. "Everyone, no matter how much he likes the life he is leading, has an escape hatch," Mrs. Fisher writes. "Often he is unaware of it as such. More often he recognizes it, or even invents it, to save his inner balance, commonly called his reason." As we plot each issue of House & Garden, we think of it at least in part as an "escape hatch" for our readers.

Particularly beautiful in this issue is the portfolio of photographs of artist Richard Hennessy's tenement apartment by Oberto Gili, the Italian photographer whose work is appearing with increasing frequency in our pages. On a recent trip to Italy, my wife, our two daughters, and I spent a few days with the Gili family at their farm in Bra, about thirty miles from Turin. While we were there Oberto and his wife, Guisi, took us to the ancient towns of their region. Wandering down those cobblestone streets, made narrow by the multicolored buildings crowding them on either side, I understood better the special feeling for color that Gili brings to a shooting.

Writing about the Hennessy apartment, Olivier Bernier says: "Most painters are content with hanging a few of their works around their living quarters. For Richard Hennessy, only living inside one of his paintings would do." Hennessy also shows us how to make "paintings" out of the objects we collect. His knowingly arranged objects of different sizes, looks, and sheens balance one another just like the abstract forms in his paintings.

We look at the English style in decoration from a variety of vantage points this month—from Edgar Allan Poe's philosophy of furniture to Nancy Richardson's tribute to "The Amazing Nancy Lancaster"—but perhaps no one describes its appeal better than Englishman John Richardson in his piece "The Englishness of the English Country Look." "The English look in decoration can absorb almost any amount of foreign ingredients from different periods as well as cultures and still retain its specifically British flavor," John writes in this month's Commentary. Absorbing foreign ingredients while retaining our own specific flavor is something we Americans have also been known for—what the French call *style américain*—which may help explain our national embrace of the English county style.

Nancy Richardson's piece on Nancy Lancaster, the American woman from Virginia who went to England and took over the prestigious English decorating firm of Colefax, talks about the English penchant for "lived-in" rooms. "The thing about decoration is that I'm *agin* it," Nancy Lancaster told Nancy Richardson. "It has sterilized houses in every country." Strange words in a magazine about decoration and design? Not when you look at the gorgeous rooms "lived in" by Nancy Lancaster, beginning on page 178.

Nothing is more important to House & Garden than furthering the understanding of how to make houses better for living in, which is why I particularly urge you to read Christopher Gray's All The Best Places this month. In a time when most builder/developers are showing little sensitivity to the prior claims of either nature or neighbor as they gut tree-filled acreage to erect rows of look-alike, successful-sales-formula houses, Chris describes a neighborhood where "the sites were not heavily graded to fit the houses; rather, the houses were adjusted to fit the sites." Reporting on the Greene brothers' unconventional approach to residential design, Chris suggests that Arroyo Terrace in Pasadena is "not so much a street as a complete environment of brick walks, lush plantings, river-boulder retaining walls, and . . . houses."

The respect for neighborhood and neighbors demonstrated by the Greene brothers in their architecture is articulated in another way by Martin and Mickey Friedman, respectively the director and curator of design of the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, and our Tastemakers this month. Mary Ann Tighe reports that when the center decided to move sculpture and paintings out into the community, they found pieces damaged or gone within a matter of hours. "The museum was at fault, not the neighborhoods," was Mickey Friedman's astute response. "People said, 'We didn't ask for this and we don't want it.' It was cultural colonialism, and we've been careful to avoid it since."

Another respectful response to place is seen in Betty Stewart's adobe house photographed by Norman McGrath. We particularly like the traditional solar technology, which results in the marvelously thick walls. The double walls of adobe not only blunt the temperature extremes of Santa Fe but produce the dramatic 34-inch-deep window openings seen in the interior photographs.

That a healthy respect for local tradition doesn't have to inhibit the new is seen in the just-opened High Museum of Art in Atlanta, photographed for House & Garden by Grant Mudford as the last coat of white paint was going on. Opening its slick new Richard Meier–designed building this month, the museum will also launch two new collections: one of Southern photography, another of American decorative objects produced between 1830 and World War I. What could be a better place for the High's new Belter parlor-set than Richard Meier's pristine new parlor in Atlanta?

Whether you savor chicken à la King with M.F.K. Fisher, Hennessy's frescoed apartment, the tropical gardens of Villa Pancha, Alma-Tadema's designs for furniture, or Richard Feigen's extraordinary personal art collection, we hope this issue of House & Garden provides an escape hatch or two for you.

Lou Gropp

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THE ENGLISHNESS OF THE ENGLISH COUNTRY LOOK

By John Richardson

The English look in decoration is more a matter of atmosphere than style—difficult to define because it's so eclectic. It can absorb almost any amount of foreign ingredients from different periods and cultures: antique marbles, *vedute* paintings, Meissen porcelain, Gobelin tapestries, Delft tiles, Brussels lace, Canton enamels, Ushak carpets, Kashmir stuffs, and much more besides—and still retain its specifically British flavor. And since it is not all that exigent, it can reconcile the good with the bad, the rare with the commonplace, the handsome with the homely more successfully than any other national style. By contrast the classic French look is too rigid to absorb anything really foreign to it. True, outside influences, primarily Italian, have left their mark on the style, but by and large French decoration of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is a monument to chauvinism—and none the worse for that. Period, quality, and idiom likewise tend to be all of a piece.

National characteristics apart, there are good historical reasons for the eclecticism of English houses, the most obvious being the Grand Tour—as obligatory for the eighteenth-century English gentleman as it was for the nineteenth-century American who had made his pile—and the less than Grand Tour organized by Thomas Cook. It was above all Cook who enabled the prosperous middle class to follow in the footsteps of the milords and bring back a mixed bag of trophies (Trajan's columns, coral combs, Baccarat paperweights, alpenstocks)—badges of travel like pilgrim's shells or hotel stickers. Nor should we overlook the "Britannia rules the waves" syndrome. When I was young, most of my friends could boast of family members who had either administered the Empire, or helped extend or defend it. Hence houses full of Chinnerys and scrimshaw, boomerangs and assegais, even loot from the Benin expedition.

Another factor: instead of being pillaged or destroyed by invading armies, iconoclasts, or revolutionaries as in most European countries, possessions accumulated in English houses as relentlessly as dairy products in the Department of Agriculture. For England had not been bombarded or fought in some three hundred years, until the blitz began in 1940. Even then taxes and staff shortages and the feckless policy of *laissez tomber* that the war engendered did more damage to the fabric and contents of English houses than enemy bombs ever did. Still it is astonishing how much stuff has survived, not just in great mansions like Chatsworth, Boughton, or Burghley, each of which constitutes a major museum, but in more modest houses that have had the fortune to remain in the same family for generations. I only realized what a bottomless well the English heritage was when, some years ago, I went to work for an auction house and saw the treasure pour in week after week, and then pour out again: to America, the country that has stepped into England's covetous shoes, back to Italy whence much of it originally came, and, not least, back into circulation in the British Isles.



The uncontrived, noble humanism of the English country look

So much for history. Now for social background. This is easier to understand if we appreciate that, while American interiors are often designed to provide an idealized picture of their owner's circumstances, English interiors tend to tell the truth about the people who live in them. For instance, the English look that is currently popular in America reflects an upper-class way of life that reached its apogee in Whig country houses around 1800; a way of life that has been at its last gasp for fifty years but has somehow survived; a way of life that is still redolent of gentlemanly enlightenment (conversation and connois-

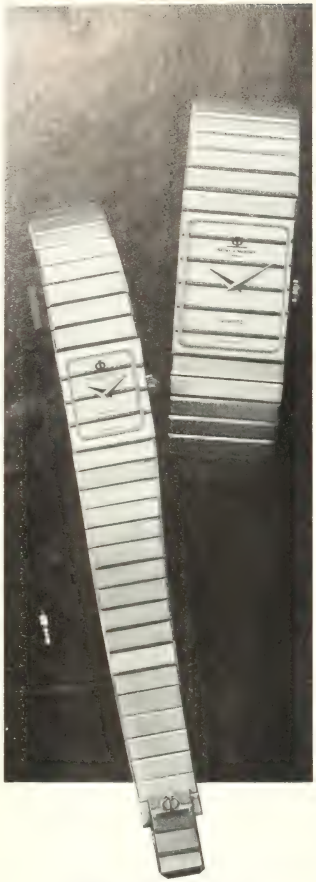
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GENEVE

In foreign hands the English look is apt to be an anomaly insofar as it bears little relationship to the lives of whoever adopts it

(Continued from page 16) seurship count for more than you might think) and of gentlemanly concern with country pursuits like gardening, estate management, hunting and shooting.

And what a penchant the English have for *rus in urbe*—all those parks and squares and gardens, not to mention window boxes and the rural air that houses and flats so often affect. This is especially true of the city in summer, when the ubiquitous plane tree casts a leafy glimmer over everything under five stories high. By the same token the wan, grayish light that prevails for the rest of the year calls for eye-catching stuffs—yes, usually floral chintz—that have a way of looking distinctly discordant in less misty climes. London light, or lack of it, also explains those herbaceous outbursts of puce and swimming-pool turquoise with which the suburban housewife, intent on making everything "nice and cheery," brightens up her lounge.

The deceptively don't-give-a-damn allure of English houses is also an expression of certain old-fashioned attitudes that die hard: the necessity to lie through one's teeth and pretend that possessions, with the exception of animals and plants, are *not* one's pride and joy; or that the decoration of the stately home, despite a lot of help from "Fowler's fellers," somehow came about of its own accord. Nothing, you see, should appear contrived, or the word that embarrassed Ambassador Annenberg, "refurbished." Wear and tear and, within reason, dilapidation are nothing to be ashamed of. (To quote the tiresome owner of a handsome house, "Time's little caresses are no menace to things of real quality.") But this cult of shabbiness testifies to much else besides: to an atavistic passion for the picturesque, for ruins and nature in decay and what the Duchess of Devonshire calls *désordre anglais;* to an upper-class belief that newness (this also goes for men's clothes) is somehow suspect; and that it is preferable to appear *nouveau pauvre*—even on the rare occasions when this isn't so—than *nouveau riche.* "Ostentation is for foreigners," for those who want to make it and haven't made it and probably never will.

After twenty years of life in America, I find that these attitudes are touchingly nostalgic in theory but maddening in practice: for example, the sofa, sagging ever since Suez (rather an obvious metaphor for English life today), that ejects you slowly but surely onto the floor; the frayed shirt collar worn as a badge of upper-class security; the starving rodents that eat your shaving soap in the night. Still, for me, the good outweighs the bad. At the risk of sounding like Rupert Brooke, I must say I love the smell of cedar-lined wardrobes, mountains of wood ash or peat smoldering in open fireplaces, and the civilized clutter (piles of *Country Life* and *Private Eye* on the club fender, Mozart and Mick Jagger records under the Kent console). I like the way faded chintz has been laundered and darned as lovingly as someone's blue jeans, the way good things are used for their proper purpose and the way bad things are not banished to closets but left around to take the museum curse off formal rooms. And I much prefer the evidence of good old-fashioned virtues like thrift to bogus new ones like Tender Loving Care—so often preached, so seldom practiced.

In foreign hands the English look is apt to be an anomaly insofar as it bears little relationship to the lives of whoever adopts it. True, the Mexican Maecenas, Charlie Beistegui, got things more or less right at Groussay, his enchilada of a chateau near Paris, but Beistegui's version of the English look usually smacks of fancy dress. By and large the French misinterpreted *le style anglais.* For years the French have made much of le style anglais, churning out travesties of that adaptable style, the Regency, in mahogany as shiny and empurpled as forties nail varnish. Among other "Franglaisisms," the French have transformed the dear old butler's tray, which serves a useful purpose in the pantry, into what is called a "minibar." As for "le cozy corner," recalled in *(Continued on page 24)*



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(Continued from page 18) England, if at all, as a joke suburban fad—this has become an important item of French Provincial furniture.

American exploitation of the English look has usually had an element of snobbery about it. In the twenties it was much in demand for grand dining rooms: very gentlemanly (grand drawing rooms were usually done in the French style: very ladylike), but it took the dauntingly stuffy form of mahogany paneling embellished with other people's ancestors, rows of "Chippendale" chairs, and lots of urn-shaped objects that were supposed to warm plates or cool wine, store knives or tea. Although disdained by sophisticated decorators like Elsie de Wolfe, all this mahogany formality found favor with parvenus not least because a collection of respectable furniture was said to confer respectability. But the Wall Street crash and the emergence of high-rise buildings with low-rise ceilings put an end to pomposity. Off to the saleroom went the elephantine sideboards to make way for French Provincial stuff that could be cut down or run up to any size. Off, too, went Romney's horse-faced marchionesses, fetching a tenth of what they had cost at Duveen's, to make way for rat-faced laundresses by Degas—a much better investment.

Mahogany and walnut lingered on in tycoon's offices and boardrooms (Jules Stein's at MCA was a notable example), where Queen Anne seemed to promise probity. On the Eastern Seaboard, however, the English look did not resurface until the mid or late sixties, and then in a new guise that reflected the influence of English decorators like John Fowler who had come into their own since the war. Once again it was traditional in feeling, but it harked back to the painted and gilded surfaces of the Adam and Regency styles rather than the "Age of Mahogany." Thanks to tastemakers like the Sitwells, the Brighton Pavilion became a new exemplar and set the fashion for bamboo and lacquer and sharawaggi. And thanks to Nancy Mitford, who never failed to rub her readers' noses in their social shortcomings, people learned a lot about the shibboleths of county life, and that included decorating.

No doubt *(Continued on page 28)*

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by

Roger Tory Peterson

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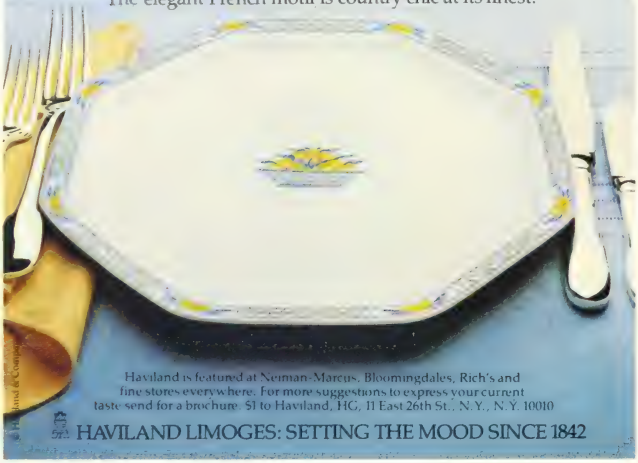
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COMMENTARY

(Continued from page 24) about it, the country houses of New England and Virginia lend themselves to an English treatment, and no decorator has bridged the Atlantic more imaginatively than Sister Parish, who has devised an Anglo-American idiom that is subtly elegant and perfectly matched to the requirements of her WASP clients. Then again we should not forget such gifted and discriminating Americans as Nancy Lancaster and Henry McIlhenny, whose houses in the British Isles—Haseley and Glenveagh—have set new standards of excellence for decorating and gardening.

I must, however, confess to certain misgivings about the current American fad for the English look. A case in point is a fashion-conscious (as opposed to fashionable) woman I know who thinks entirely in terms of accessories—status props—and who has recently jettisoned the low-tech minimalism that suited her and her apartment for a stab at what she calls "country-house chic." "But that's a contradiction in terms," I said. "Depends on who you know," she rejoined—as if that were not self-evident. The changes of idiom—botanical prints instead of Albers, yards of "Bailey Rose" curtains instead of vertical shades—merely emphasize the lack of any basic *Stimmung*, as her new club fender and log basket of Irish wattle focus attention on a never-lit fireplace. As for the overwhelmingly pungent potpourri, I was informed that "a fragrance man" came once a month. The cold hard glare of Manhattan sky put paid to any suggestion of rural English atmosphere, but it was not as cold and hard as the glare of my hostess when I failed to corroborate the authenticity of her Wiltshire ensemble.

The English look, I tried to explain, could not be boiled down to a few clichés. At its historic best, it was the expression of a noble humanism, but even in this day and age it still reflects contentment and old-fashioned values, which are becoming a rarity. I was reminded of the title of the black musical *Please Don't Take My Rhythm and Blues*, and resented this would-be chic clone for taking away my club fender, more especially as it was doomed to end up, with her safari hat, on the scrap heap of obsolete status props. □



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FROM THE INDOOR WORLD® OF Armstrong

MARTIN AND MICKEY FRIEDMAN

The partners who turned Minneapolis's Walker Art Center into a controversial leader in twentieth-century art and design

By Mary Ann Tighe



The Friedmans in front of David Hockney's *Hollywood Hills House,* 1980

They are, as so many good partners seem to be, a study in contrasts. Martin Friedman is quick, intense, sharp—his funny, rapid-fire, and often brilliant monologues barely keep pace with his quicksilver brain. Mildred Friedman (hereafter referred to by her nickname, Mickey) is a gentler intelligence. Her humor aims more for a chuckle. Her mode of analysis is comradely give-and-take rather than passionate dissection. Yet they work well together. Well enough to make, over the past 22 years, the museum of which Martin is director and Mickey the curator of design into what many cognoscenti say is the leading institution for contemporary artistic expression in America. The Walker Art Center in Minneapolis is an elegant Edward Larrabee Barnes structure that houses an important collection of modern art (post-1900) and presents annually a mind-bending and trend-shaping roster of art and design exhibits, lectures, and seminars on the full range of cultural subjects, film screenings, prose and poetry readings, dance and music performances, publications of national significance (including the magazine *Design Quarterly*), and other cross-disciplinary events that defy the bounds of definition, tradition, and, some might say, good sense.

The schedules and catalogues from the Walker's past two decades illustrate years of landmark shows and performances, the source of the museum's—and the Friedman's—reputation for curatorial excellence and keen aesthetic judgment in the murky field of contemporary art. It also testifies to some very hard work, for it is important to recall while reading over the list of their accomplishments that these were not shows *toured* to the Walker, but exhibits *originated* by the Friedmans and their staff, conceived, researched, organized, mounted, and toured by the brave few working under Martin's sometimes benevolent leadership. In the seventies, the Walker produced major shows on American Indian Art, naïve art, city planning, educational design, design at Herman Miller, the Mississippi River, video, film and laser art, environmental sculpture, and one-person shows on the art of Jean Dubuffet, Louise Nevelson, Claes Oldenburg, Isamu Noguchi, and George Segal.

Since 1980, such landmark exhibits as the Picasso show (done in 1980 in collaboration with New York's Museum of Modern Art and Paris's Musée Picasso) and the DeStijl exhibition (1982) have resulted in international acclaim for the Minneapolis museum. Many of these shows have received the full Walker treatment to set the exhibitions in context. For example, when the Walker presented the Picasso show, the museum ran two parallel exhibits of work by contemporary artists who had been influenced by the French master. There was also a display of photographs of Picasso, a slide presentation reviewing the artist's life and career, and an installation of the entire Vollard Suite. A major film festival was organized around the theme of French cinema that related to Picasso's work, and it included the Midwest premier of Abel Gance's *Napoleon*. In the auditorium, there were lectures and an extensive program of live performances of music by Picasso's contemporaries. Compositions by Satie, Stravinsky, Schoenberg, Ives, deFalla, and Crumb were among those on the schedule. It was an exhaustive (and exhausting) review of a cross-section of elements that composed Picasso's milieu, but this sort of comprehensive approach to the *(Continued on page 32)*

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So the two Friedmans were now working for the Walker, but *not,* both stress, as a team. "Not Lunt and Fontanne," Martin harrumphs

(Continued from page 30) subjects of their major exhibitions is not atypical for the Friedmans. It is also a key to the success of their shows within the Minneapolis community.

When the Walker has erred—and in presenting contemporary art a fair percentage of mistakes is a healthy sign of being alive to all possibilities—the Friedmans have learned from the experience. For example, a 1968 show, *Nine Artists, Nine Spaces,* placed a variety of sculpture and painting out into the community. Within a matter of hours, pieces were damaged or gone. It was a shock to the Friedmans, but Mickey believes "the museum was at fault, not the neighborhoods. People said 'We didn't ask for this and we don't want it.' It was not right to move lock, stock, and barrel into the community without any preparation. It was cultural colonialism, and we've been careful to avoid it since then."

The Walker was a very different place in 1958 when the Friedmans arrived fresh from school in California and a bit of work experience in New York. They had decided to come, Martin says, tongue, as ever, firmly in cheek, "... as a corrective to our California existence. We thought it would be an interesting place for a few years, but then we fell in love with the climate...." Martin was hired as a curator under then-director Harvey Arnason, and Mickey became an interior designer in the architectural firm The Cerny Associates.

"I had no illusions about bringing anything to the Walker," Martin recalls. "I felt fortunate to work for a highly esteemed director, with the beginnings of a contemporary collection. Harvey had managed to collect some fine things within the museum's financial constraints. Stuart Davis, David Smith, some fine things...."

When Arnason left in 1961, Martin was appointed the Walker's director. David Michael Winton, chairman of the board of The Winton Company and a member of the Walker's board, remembers that Martin brought a new life to the enterprise: "He was—and is—an incredible energy source. He had a concept of the Walker having a national and international presence and saw the possibility of launching major shows. Until then the Walker had been a regional museum, but Martin gave the Walker a springboard."

Martin claims he had no program for the museum when he first took over the directorship. "I tended to follow my interests rather than to fill gaps. It was clear in the early sixties that great things were happening in American art. Contemporary painters and sculptors had a commonality of philosophy with architects, writers, dancers, musicians. There was a blurring of distinctions. I came on the scene at this propitious time, and through the museum I was able to offer artists an enthusiastic audience and a space."

There is something much too simple in Martin's description, making himself seem just the fortunate recipient of a lucky situation. Where did this "enthusiastic audience" for avant-garde art come from? What made artists want to travel to Minneapolis in the first place? "Don't make this a case of going out into the middle of the tundra," Martin cautions, slight irritation showing. "We were building on the traditions and aspirations *of the community.* In Minneapolis, the great mass of the public is tolerant and interested, and there is a layer, an informed, intellectual layer, we could look to." Here Mickey, the diplomat, joins in. "It also wouldn't have been possible without the Minneapolis Institute of the Arts. A town doesn't have a contemporary museum unless they already have a historical museum."

The conditions in Minneapolis may have been ripe for cultivation by the Friedmans, but businessman Mike Winton indicates that the couple knew how to take advantage of what was available. "Of course, Martin is impeccable at the curatorial level, but he has been just as impeccable in developing support for the museum. He and Mickey have a good eye for people who have a willingness to support something not readily accessible to the whole community. Martin and Mickey found these people through contemporary art. They are masters at creating relationships. You don't want to say no to them. They are extraordinary people, full of humor, exceedingly charming, and pros in their game. It is their commitment that attracts everyone, their passions for what they do."

For the first few years that Martin served as the Walker's director, Mickey pursued her own career separately. Then it became apparent that the building that housed the original museum ("funeral parlor modern," sniffs Martin) was on the verge of collapse. Only an authentically modern space would do, and the Walker asked Edward Larrabee Barnes to undertake the job. Responsibility for the interior was given to Mickey. "They were wonderful clients," says Barnes, and the affection in his voice is clear. "We had a specific idea. A helix. An anonymous space that is supportive of the art, beautiful volumes, nice light, but not to upstage the art. I never had more fun on a project. I'd stay with Martin and Mickey, sleep in the children's room."

Was there trouble bringing in the museum director's wife for this plum assignment? Charges of nepotism? Ed Barnes recalls no difficulty because of Mickey's "professionalism." Martin deals with the question obliquely and wryly. "I had some illusion that I could have more control of Mickey than of Ed. I was soon cured of that."

Mike Winton, however, is more candid. He recalls a period of transition. "Yes, when Mickey came on board there were concerns that it might weaken the total fabric... the public might wonder. I had *(Continued on page 34)*

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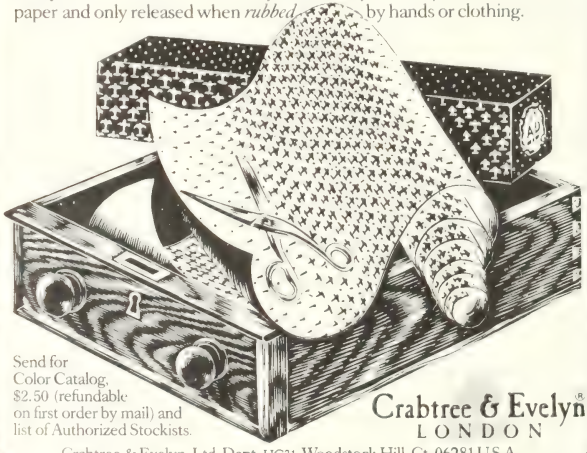
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(Continued from page 32) doubts that it would fly. Everyone knew that Mickey had Martin's ear as no one else did. Both have extraordinary respect for what the other one does and will call on one another for advice and counsel. So Martin turned over to Mickey much of the design for the new museum. That's where it began. She took the weight of it, and proved to be every bit the pro that Martin is. The issue melted. She was—and is—impeccable."

So the two Friedmans were now working for the Walker, but *not,* both Mickey and Martin stress, as a team. "Not Lunt and Fontanne," Martin harrumphs. "Our areas of interest are so different," Mickey explains. "We don't really have the same take on things. My orientation is design, Martin's is painting and sculpture. And disagreement is not a problem anymore than it is with other curators at the Walker who do shows that Martin doesn't like or understand.

"Take the DeStijl show, for example. It was started without Martin's interest. ("I was slow in coming to that party!" Martin interjects.) In fact nobody was interested in the subject, and it became a crusade for a few scholars and me. Modernism was in the doghouse, and everything was Post Modernism. I was bored to death with Post Modernism, so it seemed a good time to explore the roots of Modernism."

The Friedman method for preparing an exhibition is one of total immersion in the topic for a year or more before a major show. Obviously this spills over into their home life, and if the artist who is the subject of the exhibition is alive, he or she will also become part of the Friedmans' lives. George Segal, David Hockney, composer John Cage, and dancer Merce Cunningham are among what seems a legion of artists who have called the Friedman home their own. Mickey Friedman concedes that it must have been "tough on the kids growing up, having artists in the house all the time. But we've had some great occasions. Once John Cage and (sculptor) Tony Smith came to dinner. Oh, we'd had plenty of wine and we got to talking about James Joyce. 'Why is *Finnegan's Wake* so tough?' the kids were complaining. 'Why did Joyce even write it?' So Tony said, 'I'll explain it.' We found a copy some- *(Continued on page 36)*



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(Continued from page 34) where, and Smith and Cage began reading it aloud. Then they made the children read it. And the veil was lifted."

This personal association with the artists whose work the Walker presents seems a natural integration of professional and personal lives. Martin believes that "when you are dealing with contemporary art, you've got to know the work in the gestation period. So I only do shows for artists whose work I've watched evolve. I've got to work with them for a long time. Have constant meetings. I'm more interested in the thematic approach than in just a retrospective. I believe these shows should observe a process—as we did on the Oldenburg exhibit, take it from the sketch on the napkin through full-blown sculpture."

Nor does Martin reserve such close working relationships for famous artists only. Jud Nelson, a young sculptor whom the Friedmans first met when Nelson was a parking-lot attendant, describes how "Martin followed my work for seven years. No purchases. Just followed the work. Then he gave me a one-year contract, a commission. It turned into two years of unbelievable patience and support. He's an exception as a museum director. Doesn't interfere but is completely involved. He is consumed by what he does."

It is remarkable that of all the people in the performing, visual, and design arts with whom the Friedmans have worked, all the fragile artists' egos they have handled, no one seems to have a bad word to say about either of them. Of course, it could be that Mickey and Martin have fed and sheltered so many members of the creative community *chez* Friedman that everyone is being nice for fear of not being invited back. Or it may be due to those words that keep coming up wherever either name is mentioned—integrity of commitment, uncompromising pursuit of excellence, drive for perfection. Sculptor George Segal's feelings are typical of what other artists have said: "We've become extremely close friends. I'm impressed with his intolerably high standards, and with Mickey's absolute accomplishment in her field. And they're such good company—definitely a factor in their work. I see them as having a passionate hunger for art, and I share that obsessive delight." □

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"A RUFFLE ON REALITY"

Has Joan Kron lost her way looking for motives and meanings in decorating?

By Jonathan Lieberson

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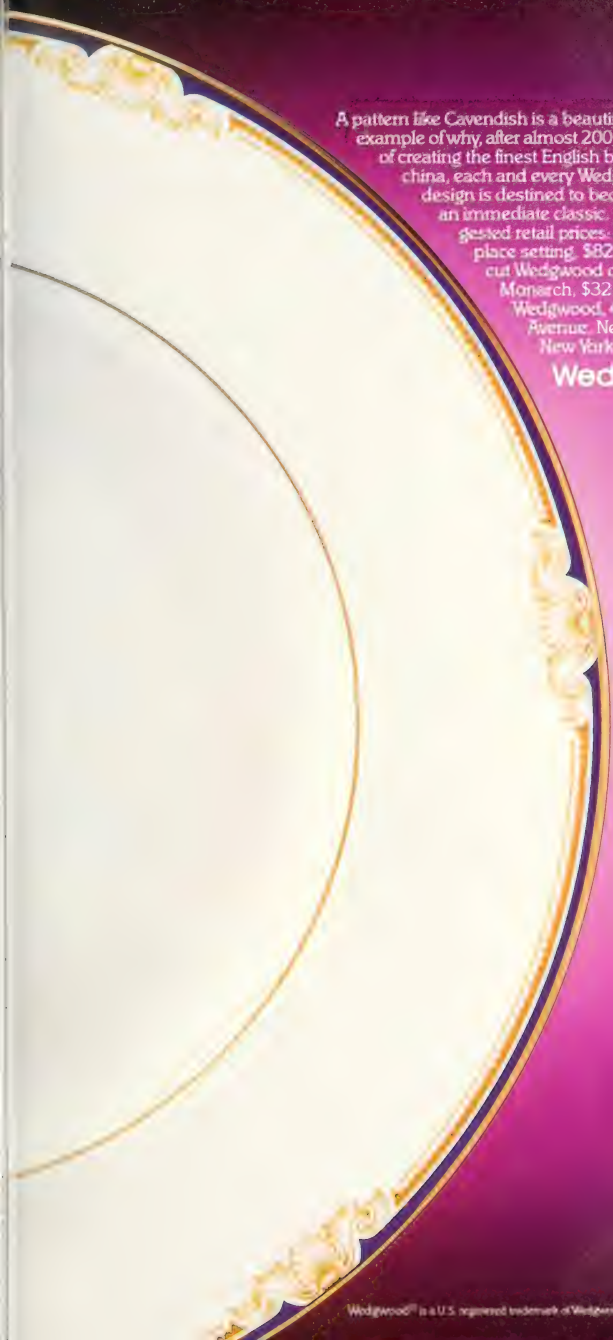


According to Joan Kron in her new book *Home-Psych*, the "social psychology of home and decoration" has been ignored not only by the mass media but also by decorators and architects, who she claims are often trained to look upon their work as purely "visual" and as an "art." For three years she has tried to discover the "meaning and purpose" of decorating, and one of her aims was to see if social scientists have cast any light upon it. She believes they have: "To that perennial question: 'What's next in decorating?'" she says, "I would answer, what's next is not a style, or a color, or a look, but a *way of looking* at the home. I call it 'home-psych.'" To read what follows this declaration is to be exposed to a true literary nightmare, a mixture of scientific conjecture, pseudo-science, cuteness, and *schlag* that beggars Maxwell Maltz's *Psycho-Cybernetics* and the collected works of Marabel Morgan.

Kron's book begins with a "conundrum." On the one hand, she says, we tend to "glorify and sentimentalize" the home. We "worship good taste" and spend $50 billion a year on furnishings. On the other hand, "decorating is loaded with bad connotations. A preoccupation with it is considered trivial, narcissistic, materialistic, superficial" and "smacks of status-seeking." To those who find no "conundrum" here, and who think that both attitudes are acceptable when qualified, I counsel patience: Kron's book is full of conundrums. Stripped of its fulsome prose, her explanation of our allegedly discordant attitudes can be stated quite briefly. Decorating the home, she claims, is not simply a "ruffle on reality," but "probably as close as one can get to a universal human activity—as significant and meaningful a human endeavor as mating or food-gathering or economic exchange." Decorating is "personalizing," "marking your environment to let people know where your boundaries begin and end and putting your personal stamp on a space and its contents." As she puts it, in prose as engaging as that of a fashion-house press release, when you install your possessions in a place, "throw scarves over the lamps à la Scavullo to get the ambience *you* like, buy Miss Piggy mugs or *quel* other symbol (tennis racquet, Garfield the Cat, or hockey team) *you* identify with, make everything in your home conform to *your* standards of beauty and comfort, you are personalizing." As she eloquently explains, "without familiar things we feel disoriented, and our identities flicker and fade like ailing light bulbs."

But "personalizing" is not merely a matter of "self-expression": "the furnishings of a home, the style of a house, and its landscape are all part of a system—a system of symbols. And every item in the system has meaning. Some objects have personal meanings, some have social meanings which change over time." We decorate our houses (and, according to Kron, especially our living rooms) not only to "express" ourselves (encouraged to do so as we have been in our day) but also to signify to others our success, our "status," our membership in groups. (Kron here ignores those who *(Continued on page 40)*

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(*Continued from page 38*) discourage visitors by concealing anti-personnel weapons like bear-traps on their lawns and doormats, but more of that later.) "Personality is a complex thing," says Kron, making an assertion that is surely constantly ignored in the mass media. She continues, "If you think your passion for blue-and-white china, your affection for old quilts, or your affinity for shiny new furniture is an expression of your inner psyche and *nothing else,* you are mistaken. The personality of your house is related to factors *beyond* your biological uniqueness—variables such as your age, your sex, and most especially your social status." She sums up the matter in a crisp aphorism bound to find its way into any standard

With conclusions as thin as those Kron provides, it is not clear that the years spent reading "anthropology, sociology, geography, economics, and market research" were spent to good purpose

book of quotations: "In decorating matters, no man is an island. We are all part of some taste archipelago." In order to decorate sensibly we must find our "identity" and "a balance between the social and personal meanings of the home." But, Kron continues, this is not easy to do, and some "homemakers," fearful of pursuing the quest for self-identity to the bitter end, falter and succumb to "fear of furnishing" or even to "decorating interruptus," whereas others slavishly prostrate themselves before "celebrity decorators" who tyrannically produce "environments" that their clients may not find pleasing.

These truisms are hardly secrets arduously wres- (*Continued on page 44*)



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"Psyching Out Collecting" concerns one Dolph Gotelli, the "foremost collector of Santa Claus iconography in the world"

(Continued from page 40) ted from nature by social scientists, yet since her book is meant to "open a dialogue" and be rigorously objective, she unmercifully repeats and elaborates them in high-sounding language. An entire chapter on "Sex Role and Decorating Role" is little more than an extended treatment of the familiar theme that men and women have different "culturally determined" attitudes toward decorating; her chapter on "Home Cycles: What Time of Life Is This Place?" makes the same point about the old and the young. So far as I could tell, the only novel information in the chapter entitled "Psyching Out Collecting" concerns one Dolph Gotelli of northern California, the "foremost collector of Santa Claus iconography in the world," who discovered in a London doll museum his finest piece, a "hundred-year-old wind-up Santa that nods its head." Incidentally, Kron offers a highly original explanation of how it was that Gotelli noticed the object in a crowded museum. He did so, according to her, "by using the same highly developed discriminatory powers that an elephant uses to spot its favorite berries on the mukaita tree, that the koala uses to spot eucalyptus leaves, and that vegetarian animals use to select out their preferred grasses, shoots, barks, leaves, seeds, fungi, and lichens. He compared the physical properties of the Santa at hand with Santas he had known." Can you beat that?

"Some people don't start *or* finish personalizing because they lack commitment to a relationship, a neighborhood, a job, or a dwelling," says Kron, neatly covering all the bases and weakening her claim to vacuity. Those who will turn hungrily to her chapter "Psyching Out Collecting" for illumination will also discover, among other things, that "two psychologists hypothesized some years ago that commitment and decorating were linked," although they will not learn whether the hypothesis was tested, or if so what the results of the tests were or the identity of the psychologists. The chapter is mainly distinguished, in my view, for its second paragraph, a bittersweet evocation of disquietude that matches anything in Turgenev: "hundreds of jonquils are beginning to bloom in the borders around Natalie and Harvey's five-bedroom custom contemporary. But inside the house, the living room is almost empty. Natalie and Harvey have been seeing a marriage counselor for some time. The problem is not sex or money or in-laws—the problem is furniture. For seven years Natalie has been unable to make any but the most makeshift decorating decisions in the living room and dining room."

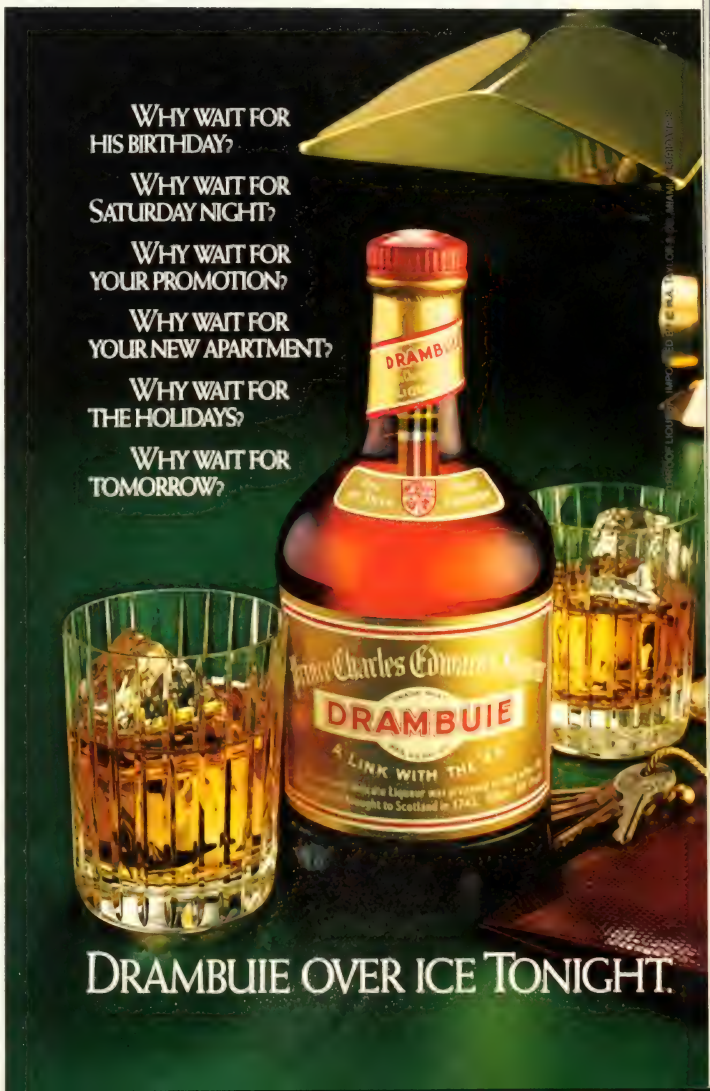
With conclusions as thin as those Kron provides, it is not clear that the years she spent reading "anthropology, sociology, geography, economics, popular culture, market research, and the relatively new field of environmental psychology" were spent to good purpose. Most of the social scientific research she cites is trivial, on the order of "comparing animals to humans is tricky" or open to serious doubt, like her claim that "most human behavior can be explained" and the conclusion reached, she says, by an unidentified "recent survey of our leisure activities": "Americans spend more time gardening than making love." Several parts of her book are disfigured by pseudo-scientific terms ("consumer topology," "achiever"), which, like the bubbling retorts and dynamoelectric machines of old horror films, are no doubt intended to lend atmosphere to the story, or authority to judgments made in it, but which in the end only diminish their plausibility. My favorite among the social scientists quoted by Kron is Clare Cooper Marcus, who apparently speaks all but occasionally in worn-out idiom: "Just as an analyst must go through psychoanalysis [so as] not to lay his emotional trip on his patients, designers must understand their own biases and values and where they've come from in order not to lay them on their clients." At the very least, Kron could have substituted the expression "relate to" for the plainer

'understand."

There is no doubt that Kron has read widely. She has found out, for example, that "Eskimos used to *lick* new acquisitions to cement the person/object relationship," although she maintains silence as to whether they still do, or whether the cemented objects could be pried off their tongues. She has read *Psycho-Decorating* by Margaret Harmon and *The Bathroom* by Alexander Kira, and she quotes Thoreau and Rousseau, Levi-Strauss, Mary Douglas, Erving Goffman, Georg Simmel, Ernest Beaglehole, Mircea Eliade, and Norbert Elias, among others. Unfortunately, many of these quotations contribute very little to her argument. For example, nothing is added to a lengthy discussion of the deceitfulness that sometimes accompanies the photographing of houses and their contents or decorating magazines by quoting the following shattering *aperçu* from Ortega Y Gasset: "The person portrayed and the portrait are two entirely different things."

Kron has also conducted what her publishers call "dozens of interviews with homemakers." She has turned up some interesting goofs in this way, like Carmen, a student at the University of Hawaii," who is "perturbed that her roommate calls all the things she has on display 'junk': the cookie tins in which she stores her embroidery, the Bacardi bottles that remind her of parties past, the Confucius book her grandfather gave her, the worn quilt her grandmother made, the rock she found in Kona and painted to look like a wave, and the tennis ball canister she slammed a volley into and dented the first time she played tennis." My only complaint about these interviews is that Kron's eagerness to protect the confidentiality of her informants compels her to identify them only by first name, together with a brief descriptive clause. As a result, we learn one thing from "Pamela, a California woman" and another from "Carson, a 32-year-old hairdresser." In regular and unvarying succession, these odd designations flit across the pages: "Raina, a California art collector," "Carrie, a Pittsburgh mother," "Maris, a Detroit woman," "Beverly, an intense, dark-haired young woman": there is even someone inexplicably identified only as "a 35-year-old veteran of the lotus position." I quite understand, however, that in the following example, Kron may simply have been too frightened of whatever consequences might occur if she were to more fully disclose her informant's identity: "'I always wanted to show people, hey, I've really got nice things,' said Rosebud, a young Virginia woman who owns a greeting-cards shop."

There are other features of Kron's book that deserve attention. It is good to learn, for example, that the chimes in Barry Goldwater's Washington, D.C., condominium ring the Air Force song and that "food consultant Barbara Kafka . . . offered a course called 'Upward Mobility Through Lifestyle' at New York's New School. Hardly anyone signed *(Continued on page 46)*





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(Continued from page 45) up." There is also her crisp pronouncement that "you cannot decorate a room before you know its gender." Unfortunately, she does not indicate the instruments necessary to making such a diagnosis. I also regret that I cannot accept Kron's insistence that in determining our "identity" we must ask ourselves such questions as "Are you a blue person or a green person?" She surely realizes that if anyone of her acquaintance were to announce either alternative as their "identity," she would discharge a scream or break into a run.

Pursuing the quest for self-identity to the bitter end

In her introduction to the book, Kron says that "*Home-Psych* is beyond style." Why not simply admit that the book is written in a style guaranteed to induce narcosis and repugnance by turns? For one thing, the exposition of her views is threatened—and the book given an air of free association—by her habit of sparing few details in describing decoration: consequently, whole pages seem to be devoted to skylights, beanbags, whirlpools, pillow shams, hanging plants, crushed velvet, shag rugs, fur throws, hand-loomed shawls, and hearts-and-flowers wallpaper. For another thing, she coins barbarisms like "status-tician" and verbs like "antique": "Sally, the folk art collector" and "her husband spend summer weekends at country auctions. They even send their children to camp in Maine so they can antique on the way up to attend Visiting Day. . . ." Leaving aside Sally's transparent sadism to her children, it will come as no surprise that by now she and her husband have both grown ball and claw feet and need an additional coat of varnish. Perhaps what contributes most to the lethargic pace of the book is Kron's tendency to divide natural sentences into shorter (and usually unnatural) new ones, presumably because she thinks that we will not understand them otherwise: "Paula buys things that have meaning for her. Designs she considers innovative." *Home-Psych* is an ill-conceived. And indigestible jumble. □

If they love the book, they'll adore the dishes.





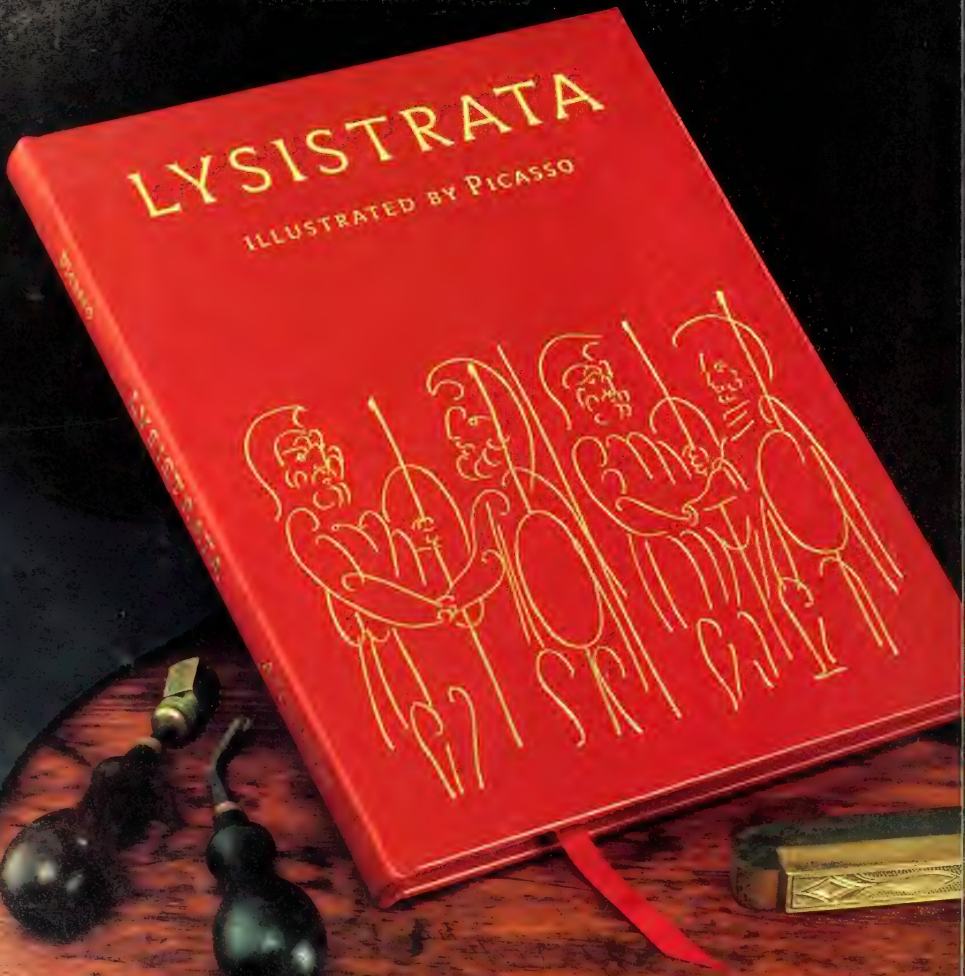
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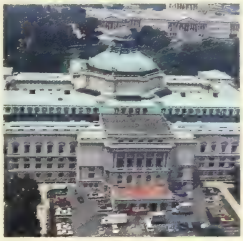
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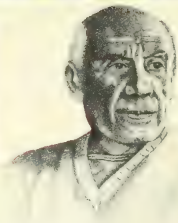
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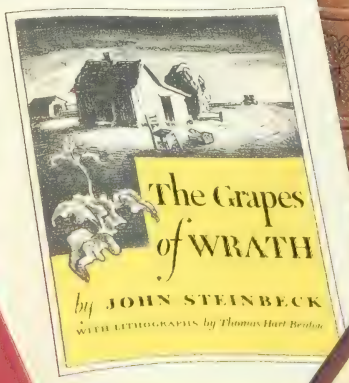
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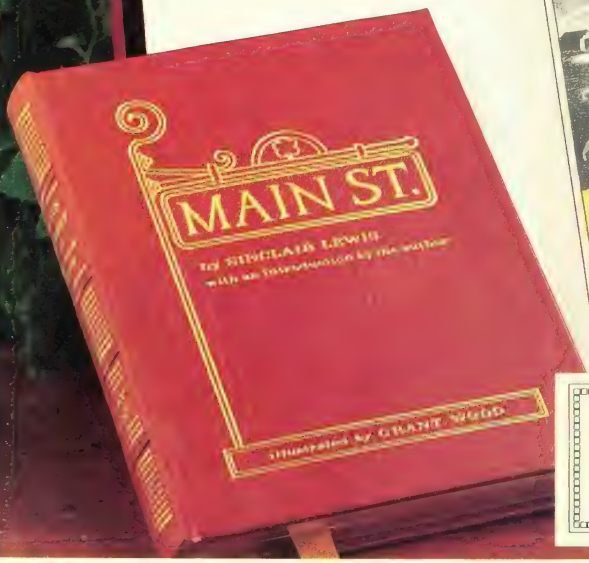


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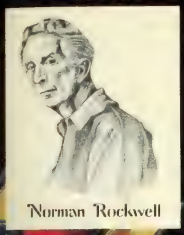


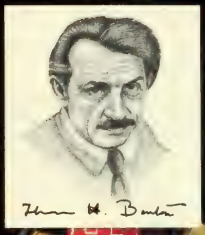
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A superlative American decorative-arts collection uniquely presented

By Elaine Greene

Every great museum collection has its beginning in the gift of a private collector whose driving focus and wealth produce an accumulation of treasures that no public or educational institution could amass. The benefactor of the Yale University Art Gallery's American decorative-arts department is Francis P. Garvan, Yale Class of 1897. His generosity to his alma mater was so great that the sheer bulk of the furniture he gave posed a serious display and storage problem. For a time—the gift was made in 1930—Yale lent some of the furniture and other objects to museums and historic houses throughout the United States. In 1958 Meyric Rogers, newly appointed curator of the Mabel Brady Garvan Collection, named in honor of the donor's wife, found a better solution to the problem.



The design and joinery variations of Chippendale chairs from three American centers can be studied at the Yale Art Gallery.

Rogers called in the furniture and settled it in a 14,000-square-foot basement on university property. The new and unique Furniture Study was conceived by the curator as a full-scale, three-dimensional, chronological encyclopedia of American design. The study-storage furniture is arranged by type (high chests, clocks, card tables) and by age. The pieces stand side by side without embellishment in long rows, close together, the styles evolving. The impact on a first-time visitor is a strangely emotional one: the pieces appear to be solemn witnesses, testifying to our history yet retaining mysterious personal secrets. This existed, one thinks, when Charles II ruled from across the sea, or when the Deerfield Massacre took place, or when Daniel Boone was exploring Kentucky.

Scholars may indulge in these fancies, too, but they come to the Furniture Study to learn and to analyze, to touch, measure, compare, examine closely and without distraction the materials, construction, and form of antique furniture. Among the pieces here are a few fakes and examples that were "married" (assembled from more than one authentic original), were recarved or otherwise tampered with. These too are matters of scholarly interest. (Yale organized a loan exhibition of fakes and forgeries in 1977.) Catalogues of the Garvan and Related Collections have thus far been published on pewter, silver, clocks, and seating furniture. A case furniture catalogue is now being prepared.

Francis P. Garvan stressed the learning aspect of American design history when he made his gift. In his letter of presentation, Garvan spoke of his "intention to form a comprehensive, educational collection for the preservation of our early American arts and crafts, and further render them available to the entire country and open up instruction and research upon them." Yale did indeed open up instruction and introduced during the thirties the first decorative arts course to be taught in an American university.

Francis P. Garvan began collecting in the mid-1910s and was one of the earliest connoisseurs to value American work. He wanted a collection representative of all important American periods, makers, forms, and materials, and he wanted those examples to be masterpieces. His collection eventually totaled more than ten thousand objects, and *(Continued on page 54)*

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ANTIQUES

(Continued from page 52) included silver, furniture, pewter, ceramics, glass, brass, iron, textiles, coins, prints, and paintings. Silver was his greatest love and in this area he was perhaps most ambitious, considering the Metropolitan Museum his principal rival in achieving the most complete American collection.

Garvan was an immigrant's son who made his fortune in the chemical business. He was a religious Catholic and, according to one biographer, "a flaming patriot." At the peak of his collecting days he was called upon by the curators of two museums to lend some of his best pieces. Only then did he begin to think of repaying his beloved country through his holdings in Americana. "It was the requests of these two men that made Mrs. Garvan and myself realize that our collection did not belong to us," he recalled. When he gave it to Yale, he made sure Yale did not think it belonged to Yale alone.

And so in addition to the permanent exhibition in the Art Gallery and the Furniture Study with its publication program, parts of the Garvan Collection travel to other institutions. An exhibition called "Silver in American Life" has just returned to New Haven after three years visiting twelve cities in the United States and Canada where no excellent silver collection exists. Yale's big Bicentennial exhibition, "American Art, 1750–1800: Towards Independence," broke attendance records in New Haven, then traveled to the Victoria & Albert in London, marking the first time American decorative arts of that period were displayed in England. Francis Garvan, who spoke of "putting art on wheels," would have been pleased.

Since the Garvan gift in 1930, curators of the collection have made major acquisitions, not only filling gaps in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries, but venturing into the late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. Funds for acquisitions, conservation, and operations are extremely limited, but a new source of income for American decorative arts has recently appeared in the form of a licensing arrangement with the Harden Furniture Company of McConnellsville, New York, longtime producers of traditional furniture. David Harden, the company's *(Continued on page 58)*



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(Continued from page 54) president, approached Yale a few years ago when he was looking for a prestigious group of American pieces to reproduce. Patricia E. Kane, current American decorative arts curator at Yale, set high standards of quality and authenticity and personally monitored the design and production of the prototypes. The Harden-Yale furniture—ten pieces in all—made its debut this September.

In 1973, under the direction of curator Charles F. Montgomery, the permanent collection of American decorative arts was reinstalled. As befits a university museum and a collection conceived as Garvan's was, it is a teaching exhibition. The innovative techniques of the design firm Chermayeff and Geismar permit the viewing of far more objects than museumgoers customarily see in one glance, and display these objects as single works of art rather than as components of the familiar period room seen from behind a rope in the doorway. At Yale you can, for example, compare Chippendale chairs from Massachusetts, Philadelphia, and Connecticut from every angle, and come within inches of each mounted on a wall. Other wall displays include Windsor and Federal chairs and wrought iron.



Probable Townsend-Goddard secretary was one of Garvan's great finds and is being reproduced by Harden Furniture.

The permanent installation's furniture galleries are divided into seven major parts devoted to the seventeenth century, William and Mary, Queen Anne, Chippendale, Federal, Victorian, and twentieth century. The "family" groups are gathered on platforms of varying heights with a pleasing, informative density. Juxtapositions are arranged to teach regional styles, diverse traditions in the same area, influences of one area upon another. A visitor can be immersed briefly in an aesthetic impression or can linger and study. The Yale galleries, charging no admission, welcome the passerby as well as the (Continued on page 61)



(Continued from page 58) university undergraduate and more advanced scholar.

Special exhibitions are part of the gallery's program. In 1982 Yale presented the results of an important ten-year-long project that broke new ground in the field of antiques. The research tool was the computer and it was wielded by Dr. Benjamin A. Hewitt, a researcher in Yale's psychology department and an amateur antiques collector in 1970, when he began. Inspired by Charles F. Montgomery, curator then and a scholar dissatisfied with the documentation of regional distinctions, Dr. Hewitt decided to combine his computer skills with his avocation. The men chose the Federal card table as the subject because so many were known to be documented.

Fifty-six tables were shown in the exhibition. The fascinating catalogue, still in print, contains data on the 400 examples Hewitt analyzed.

For each table, 176 pieces of information were assembled. Information included overall height, width, depth, and apron height; the thickness of each of its rails and braces. Specific parts counted were dovetails, flylegs, fast legs, tenons, and the reeds in turned legs. Qualitative information included construction materials and methods, the types of fasteners used to attach the top to the frame, the shapes of inlaid panels on aprons, pilasters, and legs.

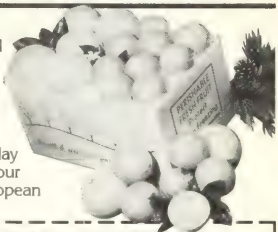
Hewitt reported that the study "generated verifiable data about the regional characteristics of this one form of furniture." Specifically, among many other discoveries: in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, cabinetmakers developed a distinctive variation of the tapered leg by making it a double taper. In Boston only, tables showed a squat double taper. New York favored for the tabletop a double or treble elliptic front; in Philadelphia they liked the kidney-end top.

The gallery's next special exhibition will open November 10, 1983, and continue until February 5, 1984. Called "At Home in Manhattan," the show will focus on American decorative arts from 1925 to the Depression, the first phase of the modern design movement. It will be the first exhibition to concentrate on this period in American design: yet another American first for Yale. □

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I CHOSE CHICKEN À LA KING

M.F.K. Fisher remembers her first meal away from home

Everyone, no matter how much he likes the life he is leading, has an escape hatch. Often he is unaware of it as such. More often he recognizes it, or even invents it, to save his inner balance, commonly called his reason.

My parents, living in a pattern circumscribed and dictated by their backgrounds and their ambitions, occasionally fled Whittier in a vaguely nervous way, as if a dog were nipping at their heels. Inside the invisible walls of our good Quaker compound there was of course no alcohol, just as there was no riotous living. People who believed in "Plain Living and High Thinking" ate simple food in their own quiet homes, and two or three dismal cafés took care of transients, except for respectable drummers who could put up-at-and-with the Pickering Hotel. My father had to stay there when he was dickering for the *News*. It was grim, I understand, at least in its provender. It was not a place where a man would want to take his lady for a gastronomical frolic.

So Rex and Edith Kennedy would take off in the Ford now and then, for "dinner in town." That meant Marcel's, I think, and the Victor Hugo, and a couple of other places either downtown in Los Angeles or on the sportier outskirts. Occasionally Mother brought us back a tissue paper hat or a rolled whistle that would shoot out when blown, with a pink feather at the end, perhaps. We would discuss the menu at length, slowly and sensually. By the time I was six I knew several names of procurable California wines, and I can remember Cresta Blanca for its beautiful sound, although I have never tasted this brand. (Only a few years ago, when we dug out part of the abandoned cellar of the house I now live in, a half-bottle with the Cresta Blanca label on it rolled to the top of the rubble, and I brushed it off respectfully and then gave it to a collection of local artifacts. . . .)

When my parents went to the Scarlet Dens then available and pleasing to them, they ate and drank as they could not do at home, things like mushrooms under glass bells, and sometimes two wines, matter-of-factly, not the one bottle sipped occasionally for a family festival. A white wine and then a red! It sounded almost too beautiful, as did the way things were served by the waiters to each person, instead of being put in front of Father and then carried around by Bertha or Margaret or whoever was holding down the kitchen at the moment. Through my mother's long happy descriptions of her rare sorties, I grew to feel almost familiar with *la vie mondaine* as she lived it, and when the time came for me to visit my first restaurant, I was ready.

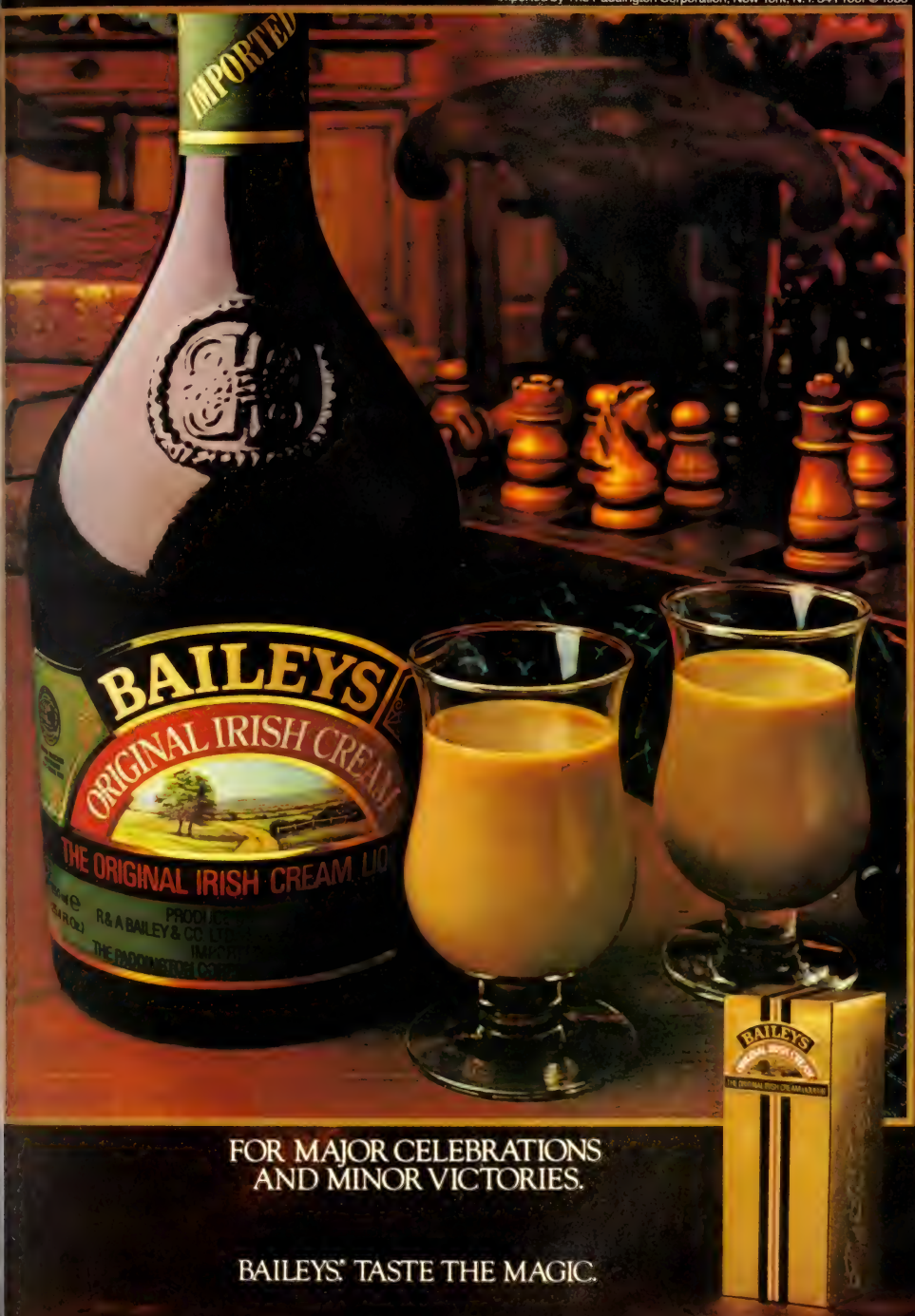


The four Kennedy children in Whittier with Grandmother Holbrook, November 10, 1919. Left to right: Anne, 9; David, 8 months; Mary Frances, 11; Nora, 2½.

I was about six, I think. The D'Oyly Carte troupe was playing at the Mason Opera House. I am sure there was a lot of planning done, with overt disapproval from Grandmother for such extravagant tomfoolery, unfitting to our years, and it was decided that Mother and Anne and I would take the Electric to Los Angeles, have lunch at the Victor Hugo, and then go to the matinée of *Pinafore* and take the Electric home.

It is a wonder that I did not break my string like a balloon and float off before the day, so excited was I. I am glad I did not, for the restaurant was exactly as I had known it would be: white tablecloths gleamed more brightly than ever at home, and the silver twinkled more opulently if without our Irish hallmarks, and on each little table in the hushed room were several *(Continued on page 66)*

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(Continued from page 62) roses in a tall vase that made my little sister and me look up at them somewhat as we did to the star on the Christmas trees, which so far had dignified our only debauchery. And kind waiters pulled out our chairs, which had already been discreetly heightened for us, although I do not know how: perhaps a couple of middle-sized baking pans covered with towels? Napkins were whisked open in the air, like stiff clouds, and then laid across our especially scrubbed knees. Mother was given a menu.

It was then that I tried my first deliberate step into the sea of public gastronomy. I asked firmly a question I had been practicing for a couple of days. It was based on everything I had learned from Mother's recountings of her flights from the family board. I said, "May we eat chicken à la King?"

It is quite possible that this caused a little ripple of interest if not hilarity among the staff, but all I remember is that we seemed to have a covey of black-coated men bending attentively over us for the next two hours, cutting all kinds of capers with the enormous silver chafing dish, the large glittering spoons, the general air of excited well-being. Mother probably sat back happily and watched the game. I took double enjoyment from seeing and tasting a dish she had often described to me as one of her favorite things in the whole world (I doubt this. . .). Anne very probably started, that noontime, her lifelong inability to do more than nibble at food in public places: forever she would ask for something special and then seem to sneer at it or push it away, so that it became family legend that her eyes were bigger than her stomach, or something like that. As I recall it now, I ate heartily, observed everything, and had enormous fun. The flame burning under the dish interested me. The hot plates interested me, and the simple but subtle flavors. The waiters interested me.

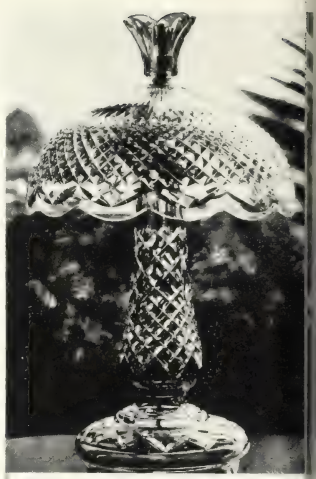
When we had to leave, after some kind of dessert I cannot remember, my sister folded her napkin with unusual nicety, and then asked the headwaiter, "Do these poor men have to wash all those dishes? May we help?" We swept out on this tag line, and as always, she had timed it perfectly to win every heart.

The rest of the day went well. I still remember Buttercup, who was indeed very plump and jolly. The best part was during the intermission, when Mother let me stand up on my seat to watch some of the audience go outside, and a tall Hindu wearing a large pale turban and a silky beard walked past our row. "*Jesus,*" I cried out excitedly to my parent and the rest of the theater. "Look! It's Jesus, all right!" This should have pleased my grandmother: one Christian impulse in an otherwise pagan fiesta. I am not sure that it did. My thoughts dwelt on other possibilities. I had tasted "sin and iniquity," and I wondered with impatience when I would next be able to eat chicken à la King with a flame under it . . . and perhaps someday much later order one or two wines to twinkle and shine on the impeccable linen of a Scarlet Den.

As far as I can remember, we kept our orgies well removed from Whittier, during my childhood and forever beyond it. Except for almost secret temples like the Elks' Club and the Parish House for seasonal routs, and our own home for quiet little gastronomical celebrations when Grandmother was away at a religious convention and we could indulge in such foreign stuff as French dressing, there seemed nowhere to go in the town.

And Prohibition cut heavily through the lists of good places farther afield.

As local editor Father was wise enough not to be seen drinking in some of the dimly lighted ex-French restaurants in the region, although he continued to leave the sherry and port decanters on the sideboard and buy pinch-bottle scotch from runners stationed off San Pedro. Marcel's was hard hit, and I think it closed, after a shady decline as an "Inn," which in those drab days was synonymous with "roadhouse" and therefore with "speakeasy." A place I never went to until I was in my forties, the Goodfellows' Grotto, managed somehow to stay open and relatively unshattered, thanks largely to its loyal newspapermen and lawyers. The Victor Hugo, which I believe used to be down on Spring Street, moved uptown to Olive between Fifth and Sixth or something like that, and in a mysterious and obviously well-backed way it stayed elegant throughout *(Continued on page 68)*



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(Continued from page 66) the dismaying cultural crisis brought on the nation by doughty ladies like my grandmother, who had fled alcoholic Northern Ireland only to land in the sodden Saturday nights of the Midwestern prairie villages.

The "new" Victor Hugo was upstairs . . . shades of the Elks' Club! The carpeting was soft and thick. Of course the linen and the mock silver gleamed and twinkled. The waiters, some of whom remembered us, or at least my little sister and her ladylike concern for them, seemed to scud along on invisible roller skates to whisk things before our noses. There was, within my memory, a lengthy prix fixe dinner which began God knows how but ended with a Nesselrode pudding, and my mother would always say faintly, "Oh, no," as I firmly settled for it, while she and Rex sipped cognac from their demitasses, in proper Prohibition style.

Once when we ate something under glass bells, one bell sealed itself hermetically to the plate, under which braised sweetbreads slowly died in their artful sauce, and the waiters puffed and groaned, and finally my father suggested that we continue with our meal and that a double grilled lamb chop be brought to him, *rare*. Another time I went to luncheon with a contingent from home. I do not remember any of them, because Miss Hope was there, and in my heart and eyes she was the most beautiful fairy princess of them all, a tall slender woman with a soft rich voice and enormous eyes, perhaps gray.

The noon buffet of salads and hot things over flames was always exciting to me, but that day I ate shrimps in honor of my lady.

We never ate shrimps at home. Most probably it had not occurred to Mother to see if she could even buy any. In Iowa they were undoubtedly alive in the good fishing streams, but if anyone ate them it was the Indians. (Only a few hours ago, when Mr. Villa the fish man blew his horn along the street for us St. Helena ladies, I got some tiny defrosted bay shrimp from him for a Solari salad, and the elderly neighbor from across the street watched me with strange coyness and then squealed a little as she said, "Ooo, I've always wondered about those things! Of course I'm from Wisconsin." I told her they were delicious, but that of course she had millions *(Continued on page 71)*



Left to right: Grandfather and Grandmother Kennedy in the back seat, M.F.K. Fisher's mother with veil, Anne, age 5, and M.F.K. Fisher, age 7.

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WE'LL OPEN YOUR EYES.

RCA

(Continued from page 68) of them in the streams at home, the fresh-water kind. She looked as shocked as if I had proposed eating a slice of her grandmother, and said, "Oh, we never eat anything but trout from our brooks in Wisconsin." Mr. Villa and I smiled invisibly at each other.) I had never, heretofore, put a succulent shrimp in my mouth, fresh or tinned. They looked in a distant way rather like curled snails, and I did not like anything that slid silently along, in water or on dry land. But Miss Hope was there, and in a gesture of which I am sure she was quite unconscious I served myself generously from the great pile of them in the silver bowl, let the waiter help me add mayonnaise, and walked to our table in front of the tall open French window.

Below us the gentle sound of Los Angeles traffic circa 1920 purred past. Somewhere nearby Miss Hope sat, speaking melodiously to the other older people at our table, her great eyes haunted and her long nose twitching in a way that later seemed quite familiar to me when I fell in love aesthetically with Virginia Woolf. The first shrimp was a test of courage and honor for me, because of my conditioned aversion to its general shape, but once I tackled it my whole life changed, and I knew that I would never feel anything but pure enjoyment again, on contemplating in any and all forms the subtle water beast, the scavenger. No ugly tale could turn me from enjoying it . . . nor ever has.

I like to think that Miss Hope missed sipping a glass of good white wine with her lunch, that magical day. I know that she was used to a less austere life than we all led in those strange times of the national disrepute of an age-old panacea. In Whittier I am sure she drank an occasional glass of wine with her family, the Lewises, when they all lived in our old house on Painter, and I know they drank a little sherry or whiskey at the Ranch. But that day in the twinkling sunlight at the Victor Hugo, when I really broke through a possible dietetic prejudice in order to prove my love, should have been graced with an important vintage. And perhaps it was.



A NEW ANGLE ON EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY DESIGN

Schlesch and Garza delight in gutsy Scandinavian and Russian furniture

By Nancy Richardson



At 158 East 64th Street near Lexington Avenue in New York sits a shop with no sign. It is an ample town house built in the 1880s, handsome but without pretense. Its interiors retain the original flavor of the domesticity found in town houses like this where the life of the occupants spilled over so attractively from one floor to the next. This charm has been intensified by the pleasant treasure of furniture and objects that accompanies the daily life of its owners, Arne Schlesch and José Juárez-Garza. In fact, visitors and clients have come to look forward to climbing the stairs from one floor to the next as though the floors were tiers from one of the Russian chandeliers for which the partners are famous.

Mr. Schlesch is a Dane of proud background; Mr. Garza is from Monterrey, Mexico, and lived in Copenhagen when he was a student. This shop has existed for eighteen years, and it is their love of two hundred years of Scandinavian and Russian furniture (1650–1850) that gives it a very special point of view. Arne Schlesch's real passion in life is Danish royal furniture. He is also a keen observer of the curious and appealing characteristics that set Scandinavian and Russian furniture apart from the official styles practiced in European courts in the eighteenth century. It is because of his frequent trips to Denmark that the shop carries the sort of Danish eighteenth-century piece that can normally only be bought privately and is rarely seen in America. "Scandinavian taste in the eighteenth century was partly French and partly English," he explains. "These influences married and became what was actually a new style that has not been copied elsewhere—a great virtue. Things that are copied lose their soul. The upper classes in Scandinavia and Russia in the eighteenth century had a total disregard both for conventional fashionable furniture and for what people would think of the furniture they commissioned. No two Russian chandeliers or suites of furniture were ever made alike. Russian things conceal a Slavic soul under European varnish. The Russians and the Danes were always themselves in matters of taste, that's what I like."



Top: Eighteenth-century paintings and decorations, Mexican wax medallions reflect in a Danish rococo mirror and mirrored wall. *Above:* Arne Schlesch, Babette on his knees; behind, José Juárez-Garza.

On every floor of their town house Schlesch and Garza have charming Slavic and Nordic hybrids. For example, a set of eight dining chairs do have a Louis XVI look to them, but also seem to have passed by the English Regency before being adapted to the needs of a Swedish country palace. They have a friendly, accessible air, a pleasing silhouette, but more than anything else they are neither French nor English but decidedly themselves. There are three important pieces in the shop at the *(Continued on page 74)*

RICHARD DAILEY


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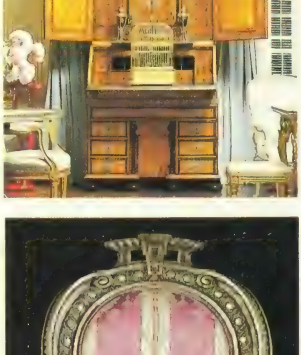
(Continued from page 72) moment that richly illustrate the confluence of styles occurring in eighteenth-century Scandinavia.

A generous honey-colored chest of drawers whose mother must have been a sideboard sits near the entry to the house on the ground floor. Schlesch calls it a façade piece because its front is strongly architectural and its satinwood veneer gives it the appearance of a small blond building. It was designed by Harsdorf, a Danish architect inspired by the German taste of Roentgen at the time of Louis XVI. On the second floor, in what has always been and still is the house's dining room, sits a Swedish rococo commode made around 1760 with a bombé front and sides, and flamboyant—though not heavy—gilt bronze mounts. "The Swedes did a wild exuberant rococo even in the years after it had passed its heyday in France," says Mr. Garza. "It's as though the cabinetmaker said to himself, 'Let's go crazy on this one, let's spend money.' But there is still a Nordic restraint under all that ebullience. What the Swedish makers did with the rococo is very fine and difficult—after all, the style is not based on a historical revival, it all started with what—a shell shape. The genuine creativity of the cabinetmaker had to be there to pull a piece off."

Across the stair hall from the living room is the parlor. Between two huge windows sits a secretary with its top doors open. It was made in 1685–90 for Prince George of Denmark when he lived at Hampton Court with his English wife, who became Queen Anne in 1702. It is made of light and mottled mulberry wood veneered over oak. Mirror was added to the doors in the eighteenth century. After a hundred years it made its way back to Denmark and is on the market for the first time.

If Schlesch loves the history and convoluted provenances that trail his furniture like a tail on a kite, Garza thinks of how his furniture will work in a contemporary setting. A pair of 1770 throne chairs from Frankfurt, a white lacquer Indian chest mimicking ivory and decorated with a gilt design, two huge porcelain jars painted in Japan in the eighteenth century to look like lacquer, appeal to Garza as objects. "I like those throne chairs because they are bold, they're not just the average good quality chair, they verge on being too much. They work as sculpture. If we have eighteenth-century French furniture, it has to be something unusual. Most of our clients are bored with serious French furniture. They come to us for something with a twist."

On the top of the house, José Garza has made an up-to-date roof garden with a kitchen hidden behind some natural wood doors. He cooks and entertains outdoors all summer long. It is virtually the only place in the house that is untouched by the world of antiques. That being so, it is interesting that the only place really treated as a shop is the ground floor. It holds at any one time a selection of Oriental furniture made for Oriental tastes, Oriental furniture made for export, as well as some Louis XVI painted commodes made in the provinces, and tilt-top gaming tables.

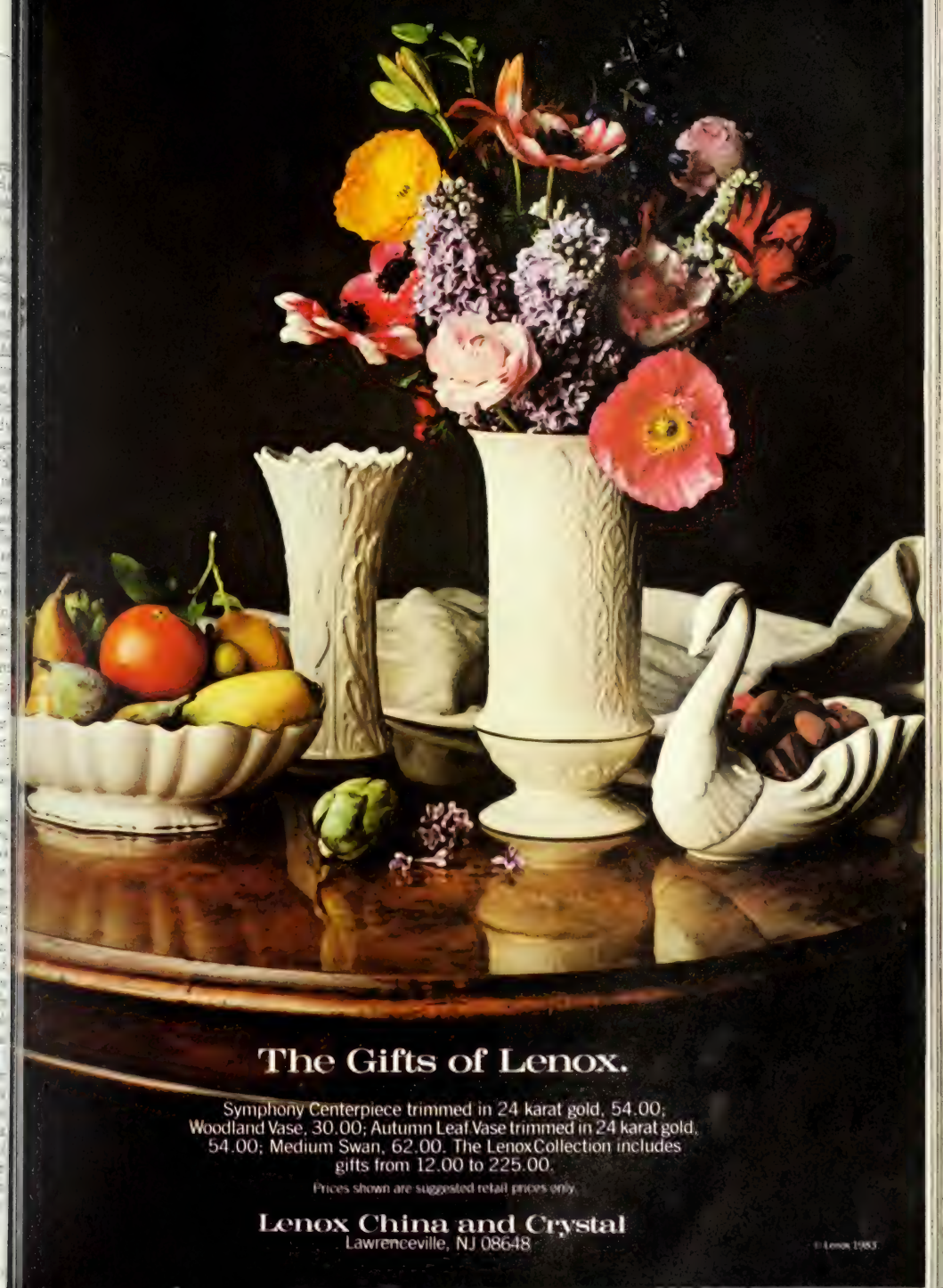




Top: 1680s secretary made in England for Prince George of Denmark. *Above:* German Louis XVI throne chair made for a Regensburg schloss, ca. 1770.

The second floor consists of a parlor and dining room except that the dining table changes from month to month because Schlesch and Garza sell a lot of dining tables. But the Swedish commode holds Louis XVI black-handled silver that isn't for sale. It comes out for monthly dinner parties and so does a white damask cloth—from another drawer—that originally belonged to the mother of the last czar, the dowager empress, who was a Dane. A pair of tall white Miessen roosters anchor the ends of a high black lacquer Ming table in the landing. Nearby is a five-piece shaving set of Cantonese enamel. The large scalloped shaving bowls have crescents cut out to fit under a chin. With them is a ewer and charger to hold a teakettle for the hot water. Years ago Mrs. William Paley bought the set to give to her sister Mrs. Fosburg, and at her death they were bought back. Not far away are four oval frames containing wax reliefs of heros of the war of Mexican independence in 1810—each with a golden epaulette or lace jabot. They will be sold to a museum, says Garza, by way of saying he would hate to part with them.

"I like this house to have a rambling country feeling to it. I love it when big old houses have a well-attended look about them, but it's clear that the owners have never rushed to recover anything. A house that's a shop can never be completely neat, I suppose that's the charm of it," explains Mr. Garza. "I live in the past, you know," adds Schlesch, "so I love this house to have the atmosphere of Denmark before the war. I love old furniture and people who have had it all and lost it all. What remains about them is what's real. I love life, people, beauty, and what I'm doing. I always say that our things look so much better after they are sold. How much better they look in rooms that aren't so crowded." Perhaps some of their favorite pieces will vacation from time to time on 64th Street so as not to forget the associations of their past. □



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THE CARTOONIST'S TALE

A New Yorker finds that in Spain pilgrimages are not all penance

By William Hamilton



Religious miracles have served European tourism the way giant redwoods, dinosaur footsteps, hot springs, painted deserts, and such views as four states from one spot have inspired America's recreational travelers. There has to be an outside reason to buy cute clothes and take to the road. There has to be a destination more specific than just "away," otherwise the traveler is fleeing, something frowned on by both generals and psychoanalysts.

No time of the year urges travel as poignantly as spring. Moved by fourteenth-century juices, Geoffrey Chaucer wrote:

"When in April the sweet showers fall
And pierce the drought of March to the root, and all
The veins are bathed in liquor of such power
As brings about the engendering of the flower . . .
Then people long to go on pilgrimages
And palmers long to seek the stranger strands
Of far-off saints, hallowed in sundry lands . . ."

This spring, my Spanish friend Gerarda said, "You must come to the Rocío," rolling that "R" like the engine of a Bugatti starting up, then extinguishing such combustion with the lispy, sibilant Spanish "C" and finishing the word off with a final curlicue of linked vowels, all quick as swatting a fly.

"What is the Rocío?"

"It's the most fantastic pilgrimage, a million people on horseback in Andalusia. You ride, don't you? The oxen are supposed to bow down when the image of the Virgin appears. It's very flamenco, with the typical dances and costumes, and songs. You drink wine night and day. It takes about five days. I know you would love it—every whore and actress and aristocrat in Spain will be there."

"Really!"

"The men wear the *traje corto,* you know, that terribly handsome suit, a short jacket, striped trousers, and that wide brimmed hat."

"Where do you sleep?"

"Nobody sleeps."

The next day, on a friend's recommendation, I stepped into Saint Laurent Rive Gauche for Men on Madison Avenue to get metric measurements for Gerarda to telephone to a tailor in Sanlúcar de Barrameda, the town from which we would begin the pilgrimage. "Sanlúcar de Barrameda"—there it was on the map right where the Guadalquivir flows into the Atlantic. Across the river was a bit flecked with Rand McNally's symbol for swamps and marshes, labeled "Las Marismas."

"The pilgrimage passes through Las Marismas," *(Continued on page 80)*



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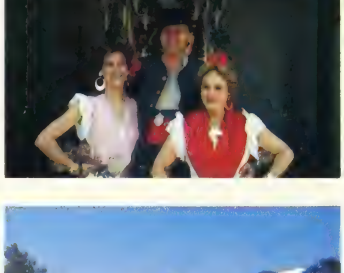
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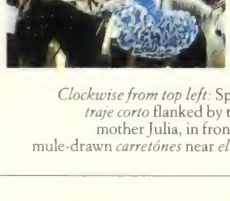
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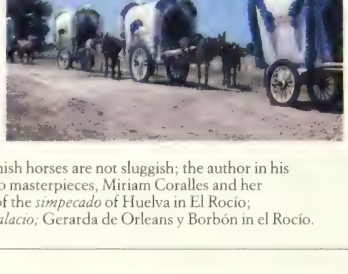
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"Are you going to be boar hunting and all that?" he asked, trying to stay cool as I stepped through the pas de deux with the tailor's tape









Clockwise from top left: Spanish horses are not sluggish; the author in his *traje corto* flanked by two masterpieces, Miriam Coralles and her mother Julia, in front of the *simpecado* of Huelva in El Rocío; mule-drawn *carretónes* near *el Palacio;* Gerarda de Orleans y Borbón in el Rocío.

(Continued from page 76) Gerarda had said, "sand dunes and wild boars."

And there was Cádiz, the town from which Columbus had sailed.

"Yes?" asked the impeccable Saint Laurent salesman, languidly flopping an expensive piece of silk into parade symmetry.

"Hello, I need measurements in metric to telephone to Spain for a riding suit. I'm making a religious pilgrimage there, on horseback."

"Yes, of course," the salesman smiled. I had the feeling Saint Laurent salesmen like to think this was the sort of problem their customers faced.

"Are you going to be doing boar hunting and all that?" he asked, trying to stay cool as I stepped through the pas de deux with the tailor's tape.

"That sort of thing," I affirmed. The next day, I flew to Spain.

Sanlúcar de Barrameda and its more famous ancient rival, Jerez de la Frontera, are the homes of the wine we know as "sherry," the English corruption of the word Jerez. Both towns are ancient collections of wineries, venerable churches, town houses, palaces, dwellings, and shops, all grown together along labyrinthine, narrow streets that make you feel you're in a sort of urban digestive system.

In downtown Sanlúcar stores flowering with cartoon-bright, polka-dotted flamenco dresses were doing land-office business. I was on my wa to parlay with the *sastre* Mago, who was told had done nothing about m traje corto because he thought th measurements he'd been telephone were absurd. In countries wher breeding and diet have been uniform for centuries, being six-foot-five i something of a joke.

Presented with visual proof of th validity of the numbers he'd been tele phoned, the sastre Mago relented an agreed to rush me a suit. He did ask m to go with him to Jerez so he coul show his colleague, the sastre Rodri guez, who was to cut my trousers, wha such measurements looked like in th flesh.

The next day at the *Confecciónes Sastre Mago* I looked in the mirror an I saw Zorro. Clearly I was ready fo chivalric, romantic, and religious ad venture.

"I saw his sleeves were garnished a
the hand
With fine gray fur, the finest in th
land,
And on his hood, to fasten it at hi
chin
He had a wrought-gold cunningly
fashioned pin . . ."

admired Chaucer about a fellow pil grim. Now I, too, was ready to give a well to get the right first impressions.

Gerarda was traveling in a differen group. These groups make arrange ments and share expenses together al the way to the shrine at El Rocío, where the fancier ones have a house in which to sleep. The groups themselves are part of larger units called *hermandades.* Forty-four of these, like our own hermandad of Sanlúcar de Barrameda, carry elaborate portable shrines that are called *simpecados,* in which hang a banner bearing a picture of the image of the Virgin at El Rocío toward which we pilgrims were soon to begin journeying. *(Continued on page 82)*


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(Continued from page 80) Standing by the Guadalquivir with the sweet sting of the morning's first *manzanilla* replacing the taste of toothpaste, I looked out from under the black brim of my sombrero as the simpecado of my hermandad, resembling a solid silver fourposter bed on wheels, was loaded on the ferry. I also saw, waiting on the beach to cross, dancing horses, women in flamenco dresses of the same bright, pop, birthday-cake pastels with which carts and wagons were decorated, men in the traje corto, guitars, tambourines, drums, cameras, religious badges dedicated to the Virgin of El Rocío, and shot through the whole crowd like stars, sparkly little glasses of manzanilla, just like the one I was draining into my smile.

Once across the Guadalquivir I looked more closely at the horses. Some were Cartujanos, a famous Andalusian breed started by a mysteriously mounted order of Carthusian monks in the same shadowy period of antiquity in which the pilgrimage to El Rocío itself began. These baroque grays dancing on the white beach were unlike any horses I've seen. Thoroughbreds look like reptiles compared to them, like fashion models next to voluptuous sex goddesses.

I was looking for a groom with a bay mare that was to transport me. A horseman put me up behind him to lope around the beach to search him out. A rocket went off. The dancing gray under me did too. I hit the beach precisely on the bone that would continue as a tail if I were another species. The whole extraordinary beach scene of animals, costumes, river, and sky stopped and shivered a minute.

The general sensation caused by my fall caught the eye of the groom who had my mare. Painfully I got up on her.

"Just don't use the bit," he advised. "She hasn't been trained that far yet."

"How trained is she?"

"Not very," he grinned, and disappeared.

The procession began through pine forests behind the beach. Horses, tractor-drawn wagons (the traditional oxen are about gone now), Land Rovers, Range Rovers, and, to me, enviably controllable-looking donkeys and mules, filed into a mainly wild preserve containing, every so often, thatched dwellings right out of nursery tales.



As near as I could make out with my stiff Spanish, this pine forest with its ancient thatched foresters' cottages was kept as it was by the same pocket books backing such ancient and elegant traditions as breeding and training brave bulls and Cartujano horses, and the pilgrimage to El Rocío itself—those of the great, rich, and stylish sherry families.

A *rengue* is a halt called by anyone anytime to eat, drink, dance, or disappear into the foliage of the forest. Rengues are very frequent.

"William, come on down here. Drink this so you won't limp that way."

I found myself in a file of men glaring with ornamental disdain at a file of polka-dotted women in a clearing by which filed horses, wagons, and jeeps. Suddenly began the beautiful movements of the *sevillana,* a dance in which the man's job is to look proud while the woman's arms work over her head, graceful as a hula as she sweeps through the steps. This is how I met Pilar, nicknamed "Pili." The sevillana really shows a woman off. It's an excellent way for a tall man to meet a short woman.

My traveling companions, most of whom were related by blood, wineries, marriage, and the civic proximity of Sanlúcar de Barrameda, talked only partly with words. Much of the communication seemed to be accomplished by gesture, body English, winks, grimaces, hisses, and laughter. In this way Pilí taught me to dance the sevillana even though I felt like an aircraft carrier that has taken a torpedo in the stern, maneuvering with a cute little sailboat.

The pine forest fell away into beautiful white dunes, the kind Berbers on galloping camels could appear over with no surprise. From the top of the milky dunes we could see in the distance an outline of thousands of tiny pilgrims mounted and in tractor-drawn carts crossing the crazed white mud of a dry lake bed. Nearer, two women danced a sevillana together by a tree, while a third clapped and sang. These dancers were far enough away so we couldn't hear the music. We could only see them dance, next to their Land Rover, in the beautiful middle of nowhere.

Rengue by rengue, we passed into a sagebrush desert, a state park that had once been a marquis's hunting pre-



serve, called the Coto de Doñana. As night fell, we approached *el palacio,* the marquis's eighteenth-century hunting lodge. Campfires and headlights illuminated sevillanas, white walls and tents. Weary but giddy, laughing in the firelight, the pilgrims danced, sang, drank, and dined. I was pleased to have got that green mare from the beach to here with me still on her. There was cause to celebrate.

"Pilí likes the American," teased her friends.

In the morning my mare was more fractious than ever. I had no desire to have her stand around with me on her while crowds of horses and wagons filed onto the road. I didn't mount up until I thought our exit was well under way, but inevitably, there was a delay. A rest and oats had enlivened the nameless mare considerably. I noticed she was pawing the ground a lot, rather like the brave bulls before they charge. Suddenly her head and neck disappeared. It occurred to me she was bucking. Next thing I knew she was coming over backwards. The marquis's palace was upside down, attached to a brown, sagebrush-studded sky lowering quickly my way.

I hit on the same place as I had on the beach. Maybe other species grew tails to remind themselves not to ride horses.

No longer as keen for riding or even for walking, I painfully but gratefully sat on the wagon in the company of the women, swaying toward El Rocío.

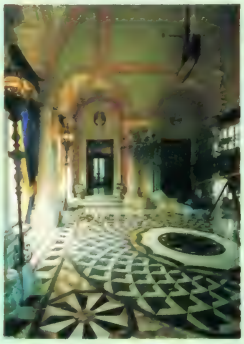
Pilí, by gesture and command, sat me next to her. Her cousins and friends giggled. Our romance, like my height, became a joke that served as my passport into the group.

The image of the Virgin, whose Pentecostal parade is the main attraction of the pilgrimage, appeared, according to the legend, in a thicket lodged in a tree near "the very ancient and noble village of Almonte." Whether this miracle occurred at the time of Alfonso the Wise, in the thirteenth century, or later (since the image wears an eighteenth-century court robe, her thirteenth-century appearance would also be a sartorial miracle), is still argued. "It is the only incidence of the Holy Ghost represented as the Virgin," explained a scholarly gentleman in a beautifully embroidered traje corto, over my five-hundredth glass of manzanilla. "La Blanca Paloma, *(Continued on page 86)*

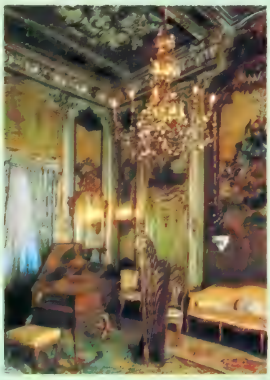


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I noticed my mare was pawing the ground a lot. Suddenly her head and neck disappeared

(Continued from page 83) the white dove, is the symbol of the Holy Ghost, which is celebrated at Pentecost. We call this image of the Virgin La Blanca Paloma. Viva La Blanca Paloma!" he shouted, drawing "vivas" from fifty or so nearby pilgrims. The image in her ancient, baroque gown stands on a crescent moon in the church at El Rocío. "Isn't the crescent moon the symbol of the goddess Diana?" I asked the scholar. "It is amazing, isn't it?" he answered. "The worship of a goddess in these swamps goes back even further than that."

The shrine in which she stands is now surrounded by a village, a strange urban entity with enormously wide streets for the huge population present for only five days of the year at Pentecost. The church has had to be greatly enlarged because the pilgrimage has grown enormously in popularity.

El Rocío has become the great folk gathering of Andalusia, with pilgrims returning all the way from the cold Volvo factories of the icy north for a few days in the home sun. Many more people filled the streets of El Rocío than traveled through the Marismas. A paved highway allows motorists to skip the trek and get right there, which sort of misses the point of a pilgrimage. (Imagine Chaucer driving straight to Canterbury listening to his radio, swearing at traffic. No tales.) Anyway, the non-village, this relative of the back lot of a movie studio, was jammed. The people camping every which way here were not wearing traje cortos and riding Cartujanos. They were simply crowds.

Encampments ranged in luxury from the bare ground up through tents and trailers to the houses such as my group had. Even in the most luxurious of these houses, the ones of the rich and stylish old sherry families, simplicity is the rule. There's a kitchen, stable, and patio. The men and women sleep in separate dormitories. People who are accustomed to very great luxury insist hot water is not the sort of convenience that belongs at El Rocío.

I hadn't slept in a roomful of men since the army. The experience is a consistent one. Snoring, jokes, drunken raving, and the same unmasked bodily functions shared by the beasts in our stable made the nights fly.

Gerarda's house had a fancier clientele than mine. I noticed people curtseying to a charming lady with whom I was talking. "She is my aunt, an *infanta* of Spain," explained Gerarda, "and her husband would be the emperor of Brazil, if Brazil still had an emperor." The emperor's traje corto was a beauty, worn and well-cut. He told a funny story. How amusing it is to laugh with the emperor over a glass of manzanilla.

The father of one of the two most beautiful women I've ever seen in my life—who had the good fortune to be the husband of the other—invited me on a stroll with these two masterpieces.

"At El Rocío, no matter how much wine gets drunk, you never see a fight. It is extraordinary in this big crowd with so much drinking, but it's never allowed to happen. There is this extraordinary spirit of La Blanca Paloma," he explained. I tried not to get caught staring at his daughter as he pontificated.

An old friend approached and invited us for a drink at the headquarters of his hermandad, La Huelva.

"In here, away from the crowds," he directed us.

We tipped back the glasses. I tried to add some intelligence to the rather stupid grin I was directing at the beautiful daughter when a woman of no little presence entered hurriedly and sat down immediately. I was introduced. The host asked her what she thought of the Communists. She made an obscene sign. Everyone laughed and suddenly every orifice of this room, the two small windows and one door, were rushed by crowds, all staring and calling at the woman.

"Who is she?" I asked again.

My host was incredulous. He said to others, "Imagine, he doesn't know Lola Flores." He explained: Lola Flores is probably as much the living symbol of flamenco as the Virgin at El Rocío is the spirit- *(Continued on page 88)*

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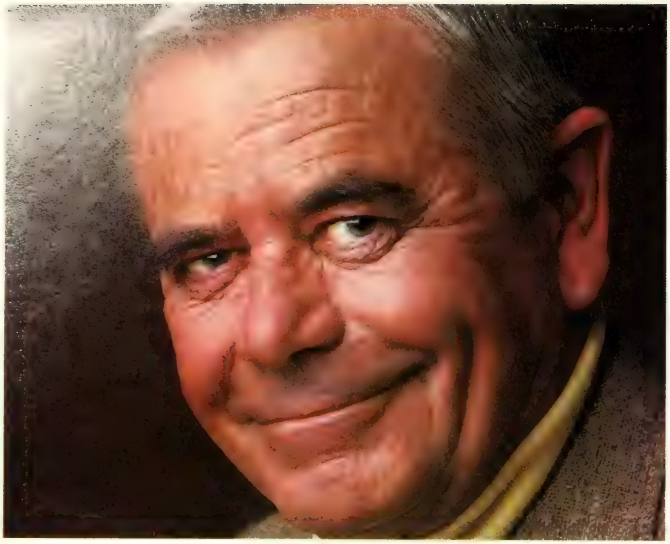
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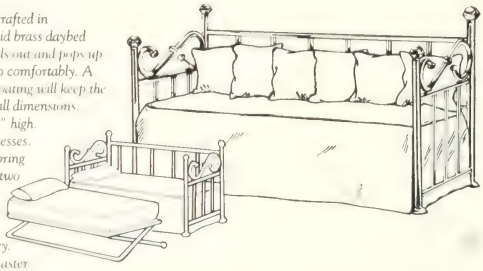
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(Continued from page 86) ual one. People stared in wonder at the poised little woman. She obviously had something. I looked from her to the beautiful daughter and considered how I was in a place where the Madonna called La Blanca Paloma may once have been the goddess Diana. The female magic was so strong here—no wonder the men of Andalusia act disdainful, dress severely, ride extravagantly, and kill bulls with nothing but a cape and a sword. This is the place where the Holy Ghost is a woman.

As night fell, we approached *el palacio,* the marquis's eighteenth-century hunting lodge

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When she returned inside her shrine the Rocío was over. We trekked back past the sherry bottles through the sagebrush, over the dunes, and across the dry lake to the ferries on the Guadalquivir. We returned to Sanlúcar de Barrameda.

Once there, everyone slept a long time, both to recuperate from El Rocío and to get ready for the Feria of Sanlúcar, which began as soon as we awakened. At the Feria there is much dancing of sevillanas, much drinking of manzanilla, many women in flamenco costume, too much to do to get any sleep—which is just what you need, actually—a touch of the hair of the dog after the pilgrimage of El Rocío. □

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ARROYO TERRACE

Seven houses on one street by Greene and Greene, California's most famous architects

By Christopher Gray



The first Greene brothers house in the "private Grand Canyon" was Charles's own

The first-time visitor to Pasadena will probably take time out to see the interior of the Gamble House, designed in the familiar Arts and Crafts idiom of Greene and Greene, arguably California's most famous architects. But after the tour, the connoisseur will walk just across the block to see not another house museum but an entire street's worth of Greene and Greene houses on a little curving road known as Arroyo Terrace. It is not so much a street as a complete environment of brick walks, lush plantings, river-boulder retaining walls, and seven chalet- and bungalow-style houses, all built from 1901 to 1906, before the Gamble House was even designed. The houses are built on the inside of the broad curve of the street; the outside follows the irregular edge of the great, bowl-shaped Arroyo, with the San Gabriel mountains in the distance—a sort of private Grand Canyon, as one resident puts it.

Although now considered primarily a bedroom adjunct to Los Angeles, Pasadena was in fact founded independently in 1874 by settlers from Indiana. The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe soon brought rich "Easterners" like the Busches of St. Louis, the Wrigleys of Chicago, and the Gambles of Cincinnati, and by the 1890s, Pasadena emerged as an important winter resort area. The richest of these seasonal residents built their palaces along Orange Grove Boulevard (now scene of the annual Rose Bowl parade), a classic nineteenth-century public avenue, where, according to Randell Makinson, director of the Gamble House and acknowledged authority on Greene and Greene, "you built your bankroll right out on the sidewalk." People of lesser means built or bought houses on the rectangular, palm-shaded blocks stretching over Pasadena's broad plateau, echoing the typical American hierarchy—the broader the street, the richer the occupants.

But some people rejected this rigid order, drawn instead to the wild beauty of the Arroyo, at the northern edge of the growing city. Charles Greene, just beginning his architectural practice with his brother Henry, was one of these, and he chose to settle on Arroyo Terrace under the same broad oak tree reputed to have sheltered the original signers of the 1874 charter. The street Greene chose was curved and narrow, and his house sat high atop an embankment, the lot rising in the back to a city reservoir at the center of the block. There were no houses across the street, only the great natural beauty of the Arroyo.

At the same time that Charles was building in an unconventional location, the Greene brothers were establishing an unconventional approach to residential design. Rejecting the popular Renaissance and Neoclassic styles as merely European transplants, the Greenes' designs emphasized instead the natural local conditions, particularly on the Arroyo Terrace block. The sites were not heavily graded to fit the houses; rather, the houses were adjusted to fit the sites. Natural and handworked materials became the rule: river boulders from the Arroyo, elaborate woodwork, art tile, and leaded glass from local artisans. The houses tended to be somber and low, the projecting timbers of the deep eaves casting picturesque shadows on the broad porches or the lightly stained shingle walls. There are traces of Japanese, Swiss, and Scandinavian in these houses, all melting together into a unique, clearly West Coast idiom, perfectly suited for the growing awareness that this California place was a novel, slightly fantastic environment.

A walk along the block reveals a rich mix of landscaping and architecture. It begins with the Mary Ranney house, built by a draftswoman in the Greene and Greene *(Continued on page 94)*

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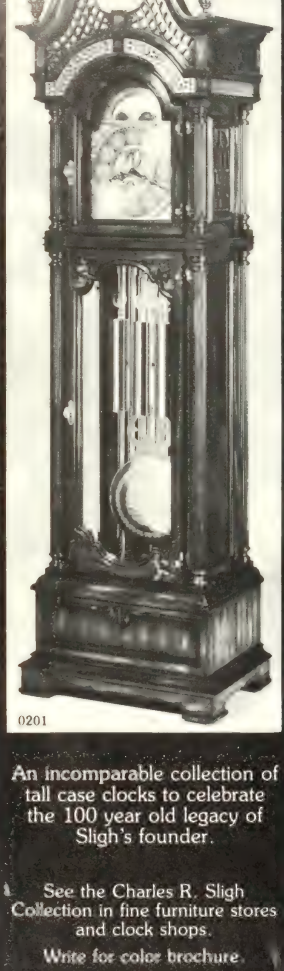
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Arroyo Terrace is a great, fluid street, rising and falling like a melody

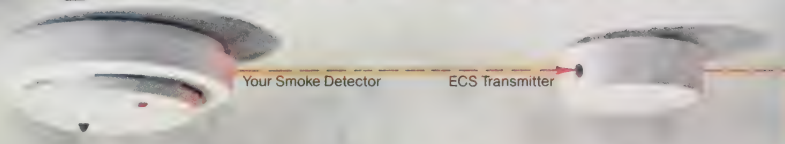
(Continued from page 92) office, its green-shingled walls, deep eaves, and low clinker-brick border signaling a connection to the larger, similar Gamble house across the street on Westmoreland Place. Then begins a row of tall hedges and Eugenia bushes, the latter trimmed into ten-foot-high cylinders. The hedges screen the second and third houses from full view, and the brick sidewalk begins here, a flowing red river of herringbone and running-bond brickwork, parting the hedge at the driveways and other entrances. The Hawks house, which belonged to Frank W. Hawks, a hotel investor from Wisconsin and father of producer Howard Hawks, has one of the most beautiful driveways in the country, striped channels of small white rocks and red bricks, curving up under the dark-shingled eaves and toward an avocado tree laden with fruit.

Although the roadbed is level, the grade of the block itself rises here, and one of Greene and Greene's trademark retaining walls begins to rise at the fourth house, now owned by Randell Makinson. At the base it is just an odd pile of large white river boulders, but they gradually diminish and merge with a random course of the purplish-black clinker brick; the whole wall seems to spring up out of the ground. A sagging narrow wooden gate interrupts the wall, and carries four exquisite, green-glazed openwork ceramic inserts that are sudden, jewel-like surprises.

The fifth and sixth houses, a pair built for Mr. and Mrs. Charles Greene and her three maiden sisters, come next, at the highest level on the block. From their terraces you can see a ring of mountains and peer down into the Arroyo, still wild enough today to harbor occasional scavenging coyotes. Last are the Irwin and Culbertson houses. The Theodore Irwin house, whose original owner was a Kentucky émigré, is the largest on the block, sprawling and a bit gawky from repeated Greene and Greene enlargements, and set back on a broad pedestal of land, like the conning tower of a great aircraft carrier. The James Culbertson house, built for a Midwestern lumber magnate, had its second floor lopped off by an earthquake-shy subsequent owner but is so hidden by a tall, impenetrable hedge that its brick wall and low, clinker-brick retaining wall carry through the feeling of the other houses. Although each lot owner appears to have hired the Greenes independently, following no restrictions or covenants, Arroyo Terrace has the hallmarks of a controlled development; it is a great, fluid street, rising and falling like a melody, its odd materials chiming unexpected but sympathetic notes.

As with the rest of Pasadena, the owner-builders on Arroyo Terrace were a mixed group. A few were natives, but most were recent arrivals. Some were rich, like Irwin and Culbertson, but some were simply working professionals like Greene and Ranney. If anything united them, it was an appreciation of Greene and Greene, and a sense that Arroyo Terrace was a special enclave, unlike anything else in California. Early in 1907, when all the houses were complete, the property owners asked for brick sidewalks instead of the customary concrete, "inasmuch as the style of architecture is similar all along this street and the retaining walls are uniform," they wrote in their petition to the city council. With the brick walks and completed houses, Arroyo Terrace became known as "Little Switzerland," a name that took in the mountain views, winding road, and chalet character of the houses. Before the construction of the Rose Bowl in the twenties, the Arroyo was still a wilderness, and older Pasadena residents recall camping there in the 1910s, a rustic and faintly bohemian pastime for that period. Architect Myron Hunt lived on the other side of the block from Charles Greene, and his son, Hubbard Hunt, remembers: "We had great times going down into the Arroyo, it was so wild. I would always carry odd junk up from the dump at the bottom; that made my father mad, because he'd have to take it down again. During the rainy season it was a roaring mass of water, you could hear the boulders booming along in the torrent. Alexander Calder lived over in an old water tower on some estate on Orange Grove *(Continued on page 96)*

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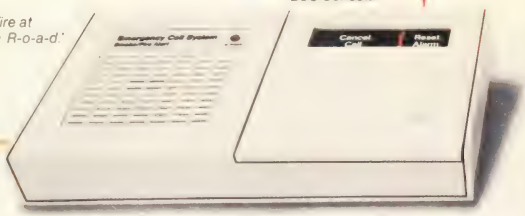
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Continued from page 94

[now the site of the Norton Simon Museum] and we would all play together. Calder would make us authentic armor out of tin, with a visor and feather in the cap. Then we'd make up lances and shields and ride our bikes at each other and have terrible crashes."

The cozy intimacy of this mixed group proved fragile. Charles Greene moved up to Carmel in the 1910s, and by the twenties only three of the Arroyo Terrace houses were in original occupancy. Tastes in architecture and neighborhoods began changing, too. The Arroyo Terrace houses began to look funny and old, especially as the large Spanish- and Mission-style houses started going up on the big open lots in the Oak Knoll section and in adjoining San Marino, which remain today the "best" large neighborhoods in the Pasadena area. Arroyo Terrace did not decline so much as stand still in a half-light until the sixties; everyone acknowledged Greene and Greene's importance, but no one really sought out their houses. The turning point was in 1966, when the Gamble family gave their house, original furnishings intact, to the city of Pasadena as a public museum. Only a half block away, the smaller houses by Greene and Greene on Arroyo Terrace began to share the luster of their palatial neighbor, and since that time houses of "Little Switzerland" have been slowly acquired by various collectors, such as Makinson and John and Nina Kirby, who are restoring Greene's own house, and Michael Citron, who has just moved into the Irwin house after months of work.

The modern residents are not so different from the original ones—most of the people on Arroyo Terrace, then as now, are not from California. But they are attracted to the same views of the Arroyo, the same unity of landscape and architecture that the original builders saw eighty years ago. Donald and Jean Duffy, in the White sisters' house, came to Pasadena during the Second World War but subsequently moved t Arroyo Terrace from th more fashionable, later sec tion to the south: "We lived i San Marino, but we alway felt sort of 'down under,' an here we feel like we're u high. You could never repro duce what's here, it's lik owning a work of art."



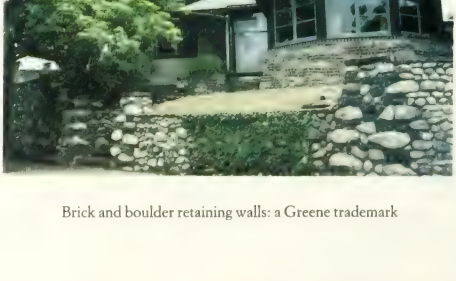
The Irwin house, built in 1906, is largest on the block

Traces of Japanese, Scandinavian, and Swiss all melt together into a unique, clearly West Coast idiom

The changes on Arroyo Terrace compare favorabl with those on nearby Orang Grove and Westmorelan Place, the latter the stree where the Gamble house is lo cated. Orange Grove bega its decline as soon as the auto mobile made large boulevards undesir able, and now it is an avenue of institu tions, apartments, and offices—includ ing the Tournament of Roses head quarters in the old Wrigley mansion

On Westmoreland, the six bi houses there were considered white el ephants by their owners by 1960, an the Gambles' neighbors tried to kill th gift of the property as a house muse um—believing it would kill their ow goal of selling out the entire block for high rise. No high rise came in, but on of the six houses was demolished for church, and the once-private street ha become a parking lot for the institution and offices there now.

Ironically, Arroyo Terrace, withou the wealth of Orange Grove or the le gal restrictions of Westmoreland, ha fared better than either. To day, dams have stopped th flooding in the Arroyo, an the sounds of great boulder tumbling through the water i just a local story. But the Sa Gabriels still beckon in the dis tance, and the birds and ani mals still come up over th edge of the Arroyo, giving th street the feel of a nature pre serve. The Greene and Greene houses, more or less un touched, make Arroyo Terrace into a little crown of shingles, clinker brick, rocks, and deep eaves, quite unlike any othe street in America. □



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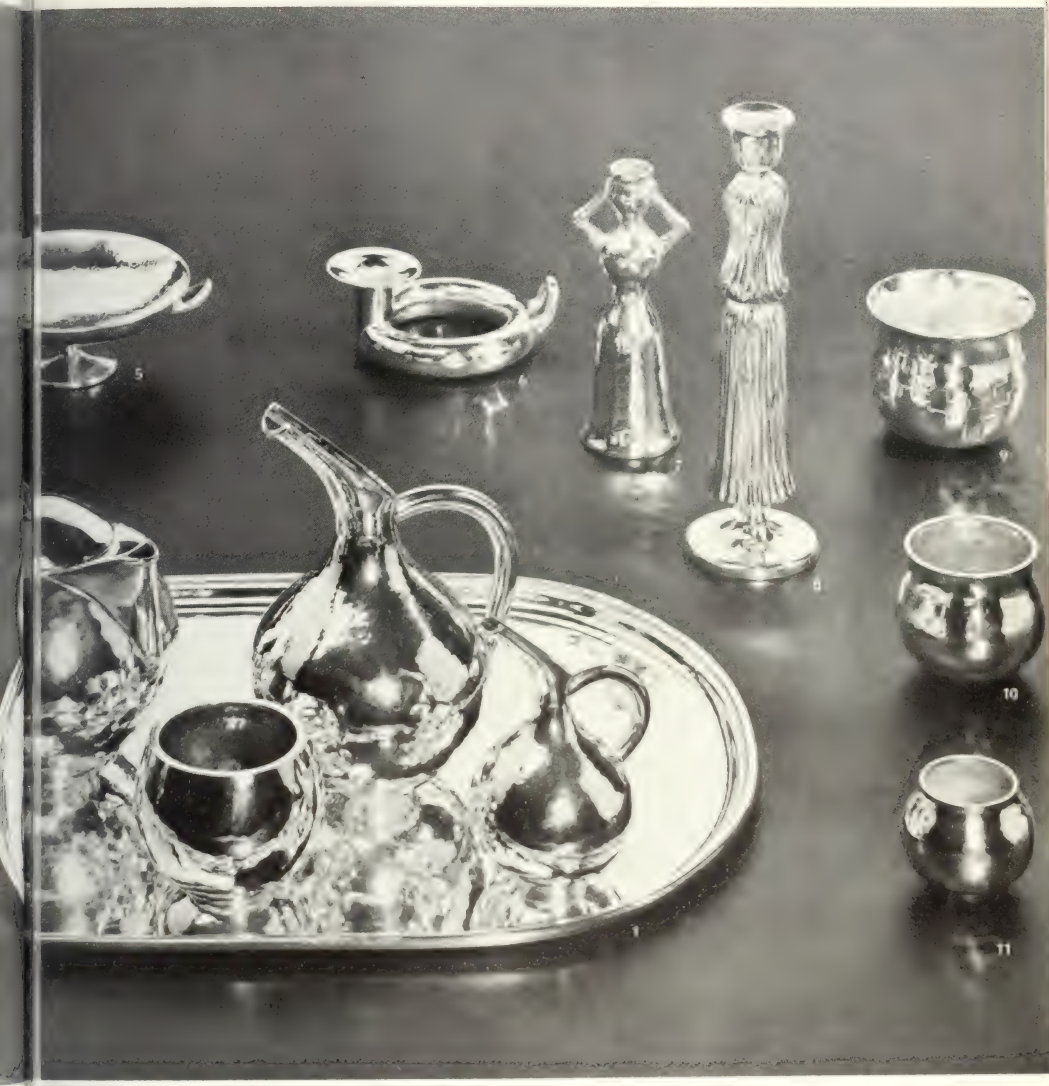
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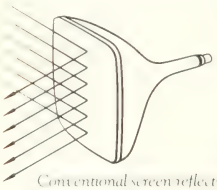
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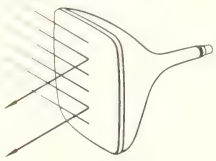
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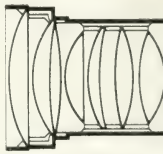


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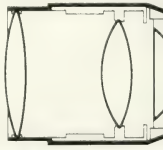
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BY ALLEN ROSENBAUM
PHOTOGRAPHS BY FELICIANO

Art dealer Richard Feigen's private collection, certainly for this country and even for New York, is something quite out of the ordinary. There is, of course, the quality and often great rarity of the works of art, but it is the mix and range, from the early sixteenth century through the twentieth, that makes the collection so unusual. This does not mean an ordinary smattering or even a chronologically conscientious representation from different periods, but rather adventurous leaps of imagination that seem startling if considered, but actually complement each other when seen together.

The setting for this collection is a classical duplex apartment on upper Fifth Avenue redone by Redroof Design, a firm known for its minimalist style. And it was for the sake of art that architect Peter Coan brought off some of his technical wizardry. He recessed low-voltage track picture lights that project no infrared on the paintings. He installed a compact air-conditioning system with humidity controls normally used only for computer

By fireplace in living room, two paintings by Richard Parkes Bonington, *Henri IV's Bedchamber at the Château de Roche-Guyon,* 1825, and *A View of Lerici,* circa 1826. The chair is American Federal.







Over the William IV gametable at right, Orazio Gentileschi's *Danaë*, 1621–22. Under Puvis de Chavannes's *Euterpe*, 1870, between windows is porcelain from John Rosselli. Coffee table by Peter Coan, made of bluish Japanese glass sandblasted and beveled like some of the windows, sits on a nineteenth-century Bessarabian rug.





In the hall an English Regency tazza of porphyry keeps company with Orazio Gentileschi's *The Penitent Magdalen*, circa 1626–28. All new moldings were added here and the ceiling was dropped to accommodate the enormously complicated air-conditioning system.





It is the mix and range, from the early sixteenth century through the twentieth, that makes this collection so unusual

In the living room over the fireplace with porcelain from Charles R. Gracie is J.M.W. Turner's *Ancient Italy,* 1838. Between the windows is William Rimmer's *Interior,* 1872. The couches with single cushions are by William Heina from Redroof Design. The blue glass bowls on the coffee table are sixteenth-century Florentine. The throw on the chair is from Mabel's.





Opposite: Max Beckmanns hang on taupe-gray walls of library to which wainscoting has been added. On an easel in front of the sandblasted glass windows with clear beveled edges is Jacques de Gheyn II's *St. John the Evangelist,* circa 1600. Cornell boxes sit to the right. On the wall to the left, *Herbstblumen,* 1932. *Above:* The gray-glass coffee table with tripod legs, designed by Peter Coan, is on a kilim from Coury Rugs. Corbusier couch and chairs are on either side of an Empire fireplace from Danny Alessandro.

rooms. All windows were treated with ultraviolet-absorbing material, and fabric rather than paint was used on the walls so no marks would be made when the paintings were moved.

In rooms that are not large, odd and often outsized bedfellows keep company for a happy if improbable ménage, an impression most strikingly felt in the deep rose living room. This room, which looks out over Central Park, is dominated by masterpieces by Orazio Gentileschi, J.M.W. Turner, and Max Beckmann.

Gentileschi's imposing and magnificent *Danaë and the Shower of Gold* is the first of two known versions by the artist; the second is in The Cleveland Museum of Art. It was painted for Giovan Antonio Sauli, a Genoese nobleman, around 1621.





The earlier of the two Turners hangs in the dining room. As in the case of the Gentileschis, it is astounding to find two such important works by Turner in a private collection

In the dining room, a French Empire cut-crystal globe chandelier hangs over the Regency table and late Federal mahogany armchairs. The plates on linens from Henri Bendel are Mason Ironstone. Over the William IV English sideboard hangs Turner's *The Temple of Jupiter Panellius Restored*, 1816–27. *A Marriage or Presentation* by Il Mastelletta, circa 1611–12, hangs over the fireplace.



Danaë reclines on a great bed as an attendant pulls back the drapery to reveal the shower of golden coins into which Zeus has transformed himself for this amorous adventure. The strong relief in which the composition is projected against the dark background establishes a physically inescapable and exhilarating confrontation for the viewer. This sensation, and it is a very palpable one, is no doubt intensified by coming upon this picture, painted for a Genoese palace, in such intimate surroundings. The young woman here, despite her nudity, appears rather decorous, turned away from the shower of gold, her pose somewhat guarded and her arm raised in salutation or tribute. Her whole *(Text continued on page 219)*

Right: Max Beckmann's *Bird's Hell* hangs over the stereo cabinet on which five Cornell boxes sit. *Above:* In the foyer, Bartholomeus Breenbergh's *St. John the Baptist Preaching,* 1634, is over a mahogany Chippendale card table on which two of James Rosenquist's seven gold *Calyx Krater Trash Can* sit next to a Bramileke horn cup from the grasslands of the Cameroons. On the easel is Yves Tanguy's *Untitled,* 1933, and in front, a Cornell box.



CASTING A FRENCH EYE

Genevieve Faure worked with decorator David Salomon to create her own turn-of-the-century style

BY GABRIELLE WINKEL

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRUCE WOLF

Genevieve Faure is someone who brings her work home with her—but only to look at. As the director of product development for Museum Industries, she spends her days finding the right manufacturers for a variety of museum collections, her evenings in a New York apartment surrounded by the results of her most recent effort—reproductions from the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris.

Faure did not give herself over entirely to the French when she decorated her apartment, however, choosing instead to provide amiable company for the French-inspired pieces in a turn-of-the-century American interior. For both Faure and her decorator, David Salomon, the project was a treasure hunt. With a book on New York interiors to guide them, they made frequent visits to Columbus Avenue junk shops, Southampton antiques stores, and two



Right: Extravagant American-made tassel was rescued from a New York antiques shop. *Left:* Above the Aubusson-covered Napoleon III chair is a late-nineteenth-century English needlepoint.







Left and *above:* In the living room, balloon shades in Rousseau, a classic Ikat pattern reproduced by Brunschwig, hang at the window overlooking the terrace. Varnished terra-cotta fountain on mantel, part of the French crafts collection, is based on pieces in which farmers in the eighteenth century washed their hands. Three flower-filled cachepots by Martel Desvres. Two nineteenth-century American spindle chairs flank twentieth-century English lamp table made from a piece of palm-tree trunk. Rug is nineteenth-century Aubusson tapestry.

downtown auction houses—the Tepper and Lubin galleries. The living room of the apartment had "good bones," as Salomon says, and the turn-of-the-century pieces they found for it fit perfectly with the high West Side ceilings and the intricate wood mantelpiece with a festoon-and-scallop-shell design. Some favorites—a leather étagère found in a stationery shop, a gray velvet, still-functional sofa bed, and an assortment of chairs from spindletop to spoonback. Parts of the collection complete a room that's both livable and dazzling—balloon curtains in a reproduced eighteenth-century fabric round out the rich feel of the room, and blue-and-white porcelain provides a striking contrast to the black étagère. The walls tell a variety of stories—there is a bit of Rangoon history, and late-nineteenth-century looks at a young man and Othello with Desdemona. Several French family heirlooms placed in the bedroom are complemented by linens reproduced from the fabric collection at the



Above: Turn-of-the-century leather étagère filled with reproductions from the collection. On top shelf, eighteenth-century candlesticks by Moustiers, seventeenth-century cachepot by Montagnon. On middle shelves, wine flask, eighteenth-century porcelain dolphins, and pair of wine coolers, all by Martel Desvres. On lower shelves, wooden animal boxes by a contemporary French craftsman.
Opposite: In the living room the storming of Rangoon by the British in 1824 is depicted in gravures published two years later. Oak dining table is set with Musée des Arts Décoratifs reproductions: late-seventeenth-century Veuve Perrin faïence by Martel Desvres. Glasses by Portieux are based on seventeenth-century Venetian originals. Nineteenth-century sketches in the museum's drawing department inspired the Baccarat decanters and sterling silver candlesticks by Tetard. Nineteenth-century wall hanging on right looks like velvet but is actually painted metal.







Above: French antique perfume bottles decorate a Louis XVI man's toilet table with a potpourri bag hanging from a drawer pull. *Right:* In the master bedroom, bed is covered with sheets and comforter in the eighteenth-century Sèvres pattern reproduced by Atelier Martex. Nestled in pillows is a potpourri cushion in Beaucourt print. Portrait of an old man in Morocco by contemporary artist Anthony Christian. Table at right has potpourri basket by Cherchez and covered letter file by I Was Framed. Wallpaper by Schumacher.

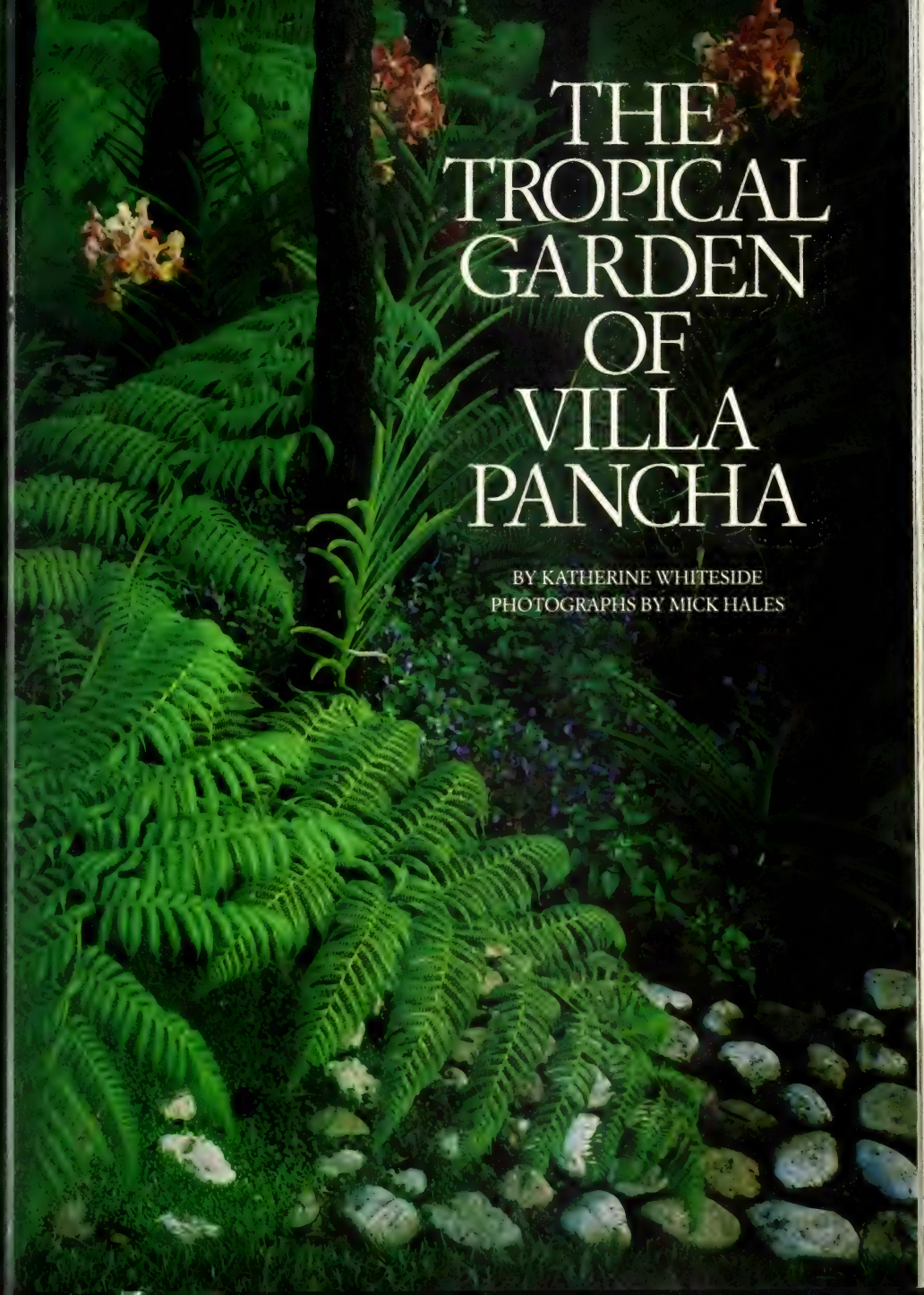
Musée and contemporary lace curtains hand-dipped in tea.

The Musée des Arts Décoratifs, now housed in the Louvre, has been preserving French decorative art since 1864. The Musée shops are being planned for major department stores—the first one debuts at Bergdorf Goodman in New York in late October. Also being commissioned is a one-of-a-kind collection of crafts made by artisans and farmers in the French countryside.

After almost a year of work with the museum (the project has been going on for two years), Genevieve Faure's apartment has become a lively mixture of French and American decorative history, quite appropriate for a woman who brings old pieces to new markets. □ *Produced by Carolyn Sollis*







THE TROPICAL GARDEN OF VILLA PANCHA

BY KATHERINE WHITESIDE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICK HALES



People in the Dominican Republic are born into a life shaped by the intense heat of the sun. There is no use fighting it, nor anything to gain from ignoring it, and the Dominicans decided long ago to peacefully concede to it, relaxing age-old northern conventions of dress, manner, and ceremony to follow the informal but still-graceful rules of living known as *etiqueta tropical.* No one, perhaps, is more practiced in this tropical attitude than Doña Maria Grieser de Tavares. Everything about her property in Santiago de los Caballeros, called Villa Pancha, bespeaks a profound understanding of the relationship between tropical man and nature. Indeed, her garden at Villa Pancha, its brilliant color cooled and controlled by swaths of multi-textured green, its naturalistic layouts woven together in knowing designs, is etiqueta tropical taken to its natural conclusion.

Doña Maria's love of tropical horticulture began at an early age, in the New Jersey greenhouse of rare-plant specialist Henry Rudolph, the father of one of her teachers. Staying with him whenever her parents went on extended travels, she learned all the mysteries and tricks of plant reproduction. When she married Gustavo Tavares, who had graduated from the Cornell Agriculture School, her love of plants was encouraged even more. After sixty years, she is renowned for her flourishing garden, and is still planning additions to it with the help of her three children. "My plants are generous with me," Doña Maria has been known to say, "because I am generous with them."

The generous gardens of Villa Pancha, a low, rambling wooden house built in the twenties, begin just outside the house itself. An interior patio, open to the friendly skies, is surrounded by a colorfully tiled, plant-filled veranda that serves as an outdoor hallway for the entire house. From a covered terrace nearby, the most secluded part of the garden unfolds. Gracefully curving flower beds (laid out with a garden hose by long-time Tavares friend and Miami garden designer James E. Voss) are shaded by mahoganies, cecropias, araucarias, and unusual trees that sprout gourds directly from their trunks. Towering over them all are the massive half-century-old rain trees with their paradoxically delicate leaves. Below, glorious West Indian tree ferns provide a second shade for pale begonias and anthuriums. Yards and yards of lacy fern, originally three small plants brought by Doña Maria from New Jersey, border the beds in this garden, which is walled with head-high *Heliconia,* torch gingers, crotons, and palms that swish with the sounds of old-fashioned overhead fans.

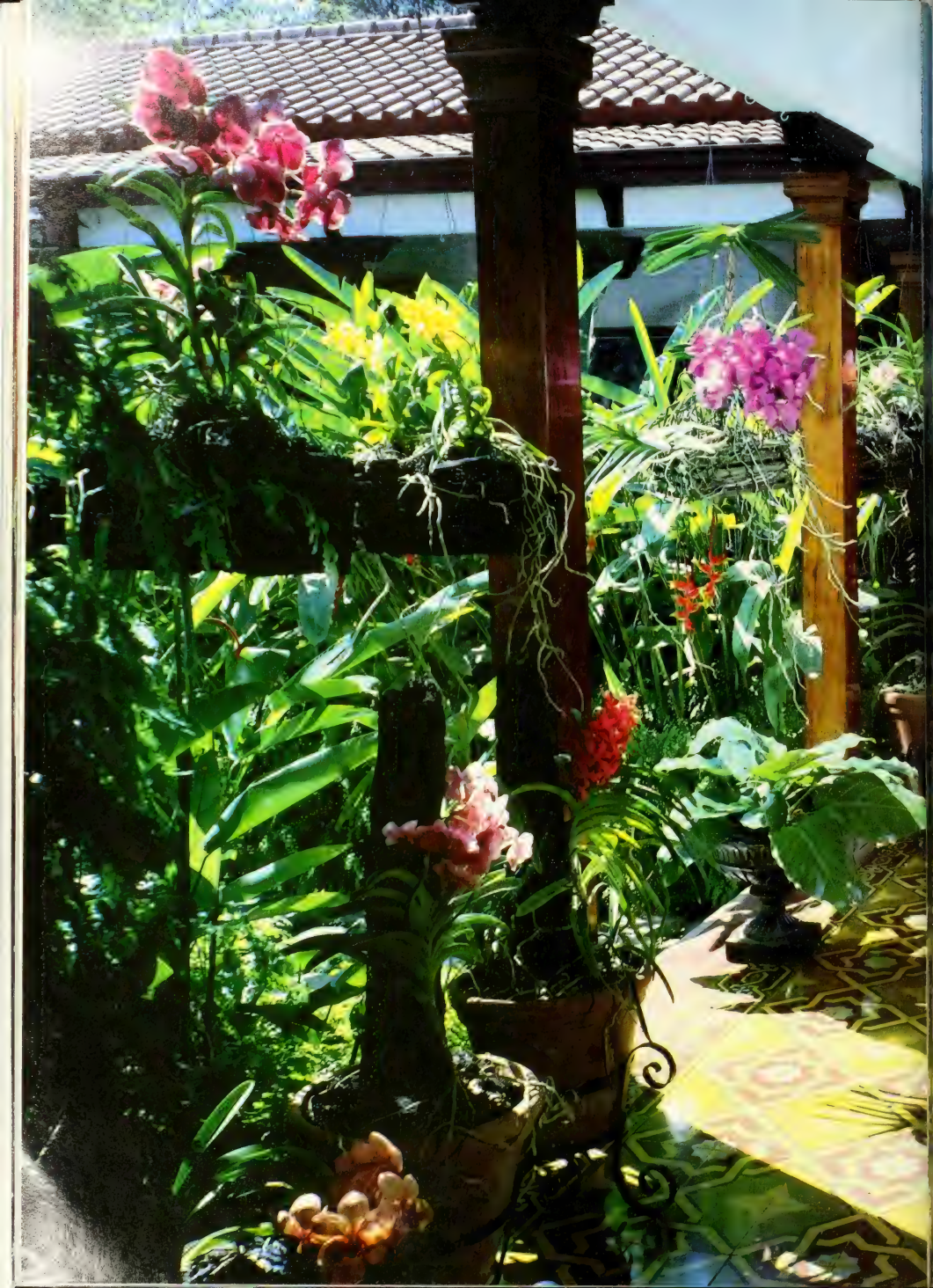
Beyond, down a winding flagstone path and past a gentle fountain, the visitor steps into a living floral kaleidoscope. Scattered like jewels on the ground are tiny ferns, green peperomias, striped-leaf *Calanthe,* Poor-man's Pansy (*Torenia fournieri*), and wild native ground orchids. But without a doubt the real luminaries of Doña Maria's garden are the exotic orchids. Red *Renanthera* explode like fireworks. Fine coteries of *Cattleya* seem to gossip in little out-of-the-way areas. Splendid arandas and *Arachnis* from Singapore join *Vanda* and *Ascocenda* from Thailand to create outdoor ballrooms of colors and shapes.

It is the bed of *Vanda teres* that Doña Maria considers one of her greatest treasures. The plants are thirty years old, gifts from E.I. Kilbourne, an American and former administrator of Dominican sugar mills. Cherished pets, these *Vanda* bloom continuously, growing to a staggering height of ten feet. The loftiness of their bright pink flowers is steadied by columns of tree-fern trunk; aerial roots make a tangled maze at eye level. Though orchids form the largest family of flowering plants in the world, they can never seem common. Even the sometimes staid *Exotica,* bible to all tropical gardeners, gushes that the orchid is queen of all the exotics. And if the orchid is queen, this garden is truly royal.

A visitor's eye is drawn by bright colors beckoning from an expanse of sunlit lawn. Passing on your left a huge rain tree adorned with staghorn ferns, which offers protection to an undulating bed of bromeliads, you reach a pergola heavily draped with the white *Thunbergia* vine. Its beautiful blossoms drip to the ground like stalactites and cast dark, cool green shade. The exciting Caribbean colors have vanished; the mood has changed; you are in *el jardín blanco.* A crescent of moon-white Rex jasmine covers an arch, waxing into full bloom every ninety days. Clouds of tropical narcissi, gardenias, and orange blossoms send fragrant billows of scent across green lawns. A large alabaster island of Malabar jasmine floats in a sea of ivory begonias and agapanthuses. The sound of rushing water can be heard now, and at the end of a tunnel of white coral vine is its source, a unique water cascade. Here a smooth, bountiful flow of water tumbles down a series of antique cast-iron cauldrons once used in the distillation of rum, which was a *(Text continued on page 212)*

Preceding pages: White pebbles border a ground-orchid bed featuring Josephine Van Brero *Vanda* crosses and an island native—the West Indian tree fern. Tree-fern trunks support more orchids in the background. *Opposite:* Palms and a large cecropia tree shade a water cascade in the white garden. Snowy *Thunbergia* is blooming on the roof of a cool pergola. *Above:* An antique jar nestles in a curving wall. Coral-vine blossoms form a passageway.







In tropical style, Villa Pancha's tiled *galeria* is the center of household activities. *Heliconia, Ascocenda,* and *Vanda* crosses flourish in the sunlight of the interior patio. The crucifixes on the wall are local antiques. White *Cattleya* orchids crown a marble-topped table at right.













Top left: Rex jasmine describes an arch in the white garden. Pearly begonias and agapanthuses fill a bed to the right. *Top right: Vanda* and tree ferns thrive in the ground-orchid beds. Yellow shrimp plants shine under a triangle palm at rear. *Center left:* Pink begonias and *Vanda* are interspersed with wild ferns. *Center right: Renanthera* orchids send sprays of red flowers over green foliage. An araucaria tree from Central America has grown to a height of fifty feet. *Bottom left:* Thirty-year-old *Vanda teres* orchids ascend ten feet above impatiens. Aerial roots weave a tangled web. *Bottom right:* Samana tree branches, leafless in winter, support staghorn and bird's-nest ferns. Kalanchoe glows on the right.

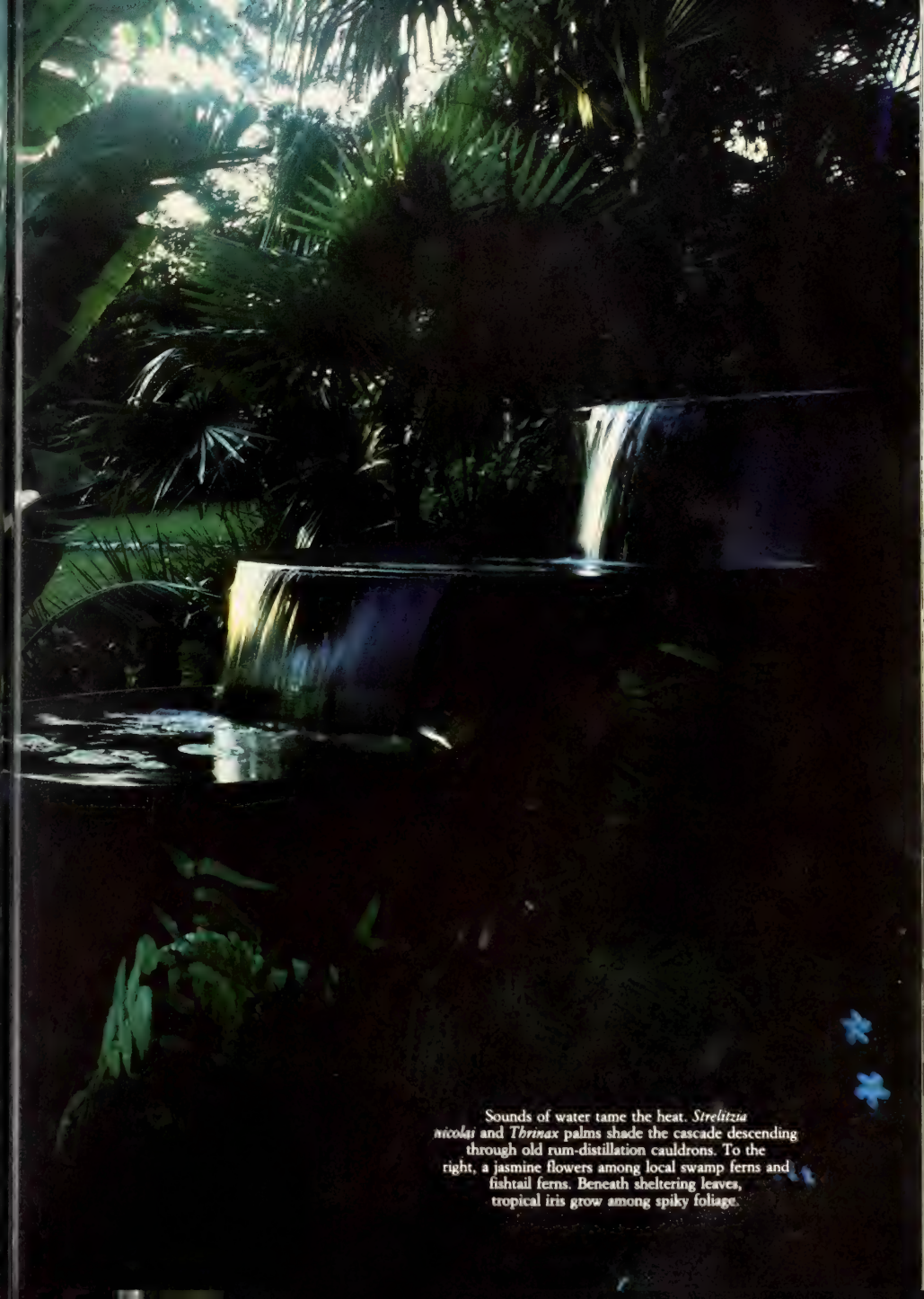







Top left: Orange *Epidendrum* orchids and yellow *Crossandra* vie for attention underneath pink *Vanda* A mahogany tree shades a wooden playhouse for great-grandchildren. *Top right: Dracaena marginata* explodes between ferns, arantheras, *Arachnis,* and arandas. *Center left:* Mokara and aeridachni orchids, native to Singapore, require positions receiving maximum sunlight. *Center right:* Aeridachnis bloom to the left of the mokaras. *Bottom left:* Orange *Clivia* and pink *Haemanthus* lilies under a giant lea add to the polychromy of the *Vanda teres* bed. Across the path stands a *Pleomele. Bottom right:* In the *Vanda teres* bed, aerial roots, necessary for feeding, wave above the striped leaf *Calathea* and yellow *Crossandra.*





Sounds of water tame the heat. *Strelitzia nicolai* and *Thrinax* palms shade the cascade descending through old rum-distillation cauldrons. To the right, a jasmine flowers among local swamp ferns and fishtail ferns. Beneath sheltering leaves, tropical iris grow among spiky foliage.

RIVER OAKS HIGH STYLE

McMillen remodels and decorates a house for Carolyn Farb in Houston

BY LISA GERMANY
PHOTOGRAPHS BY FELICIANO



Right: A reproduction Russian lantern dangles with the delicacy of a necklace above the oval entrance hall. A rare Korean chest inlaid with mother-of-pearl stands at the top of the stairs.
Left: The house turns a stately Georgian façade to Houston's River Oaks Boulevard.
Overleaf: The music room's variety of textures and colors merge melodiously on the patterned turf of a Sultanabad rug.

Rhyme and reason. Carolyn Farb believes life must have both. And when she identifies the entrance hall of her newly renovated Houston house as its "soul" she pinpoints the spot where a perfect mingling of the poetic and the rational has occurred. Black and white squares hopscotch their way across the floor creating visual rhymes as they go while the precise lines and sweeping flow of a banister reach out to encircle and control them in a smooth embrace. This room, the core of a Georgian-style house built in 1940 on Houston's renowned River Oaks Boulevard, was the starting point for a massive renovation under the direction of the New York design firm McMillen, Inc. McMillen razed two-thirds of the original house and then added on to make it half again as large as it was. When they had finished giving the house the fine architectural details—classical pi-











Left: Examples of the stunning collection of Chinese porcelain assembled by McMillen are displayed in these two views of the living room. An eighteenth-century mantel sports two colors of marble, pagoda valances crown silk damask curtains, and upholstered chairs mirror each other across an eighteenth-century English bench. A lacquered coffee table from China and English chairs are backed by a grand Coromandel screen, a piece from an earlier Farb house. Walls are glazed in the color of soft parchment.







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A PAINTER AS DECOR

Rediscovering a Victorian artist's quirky designs

BY SIMON JERVIS

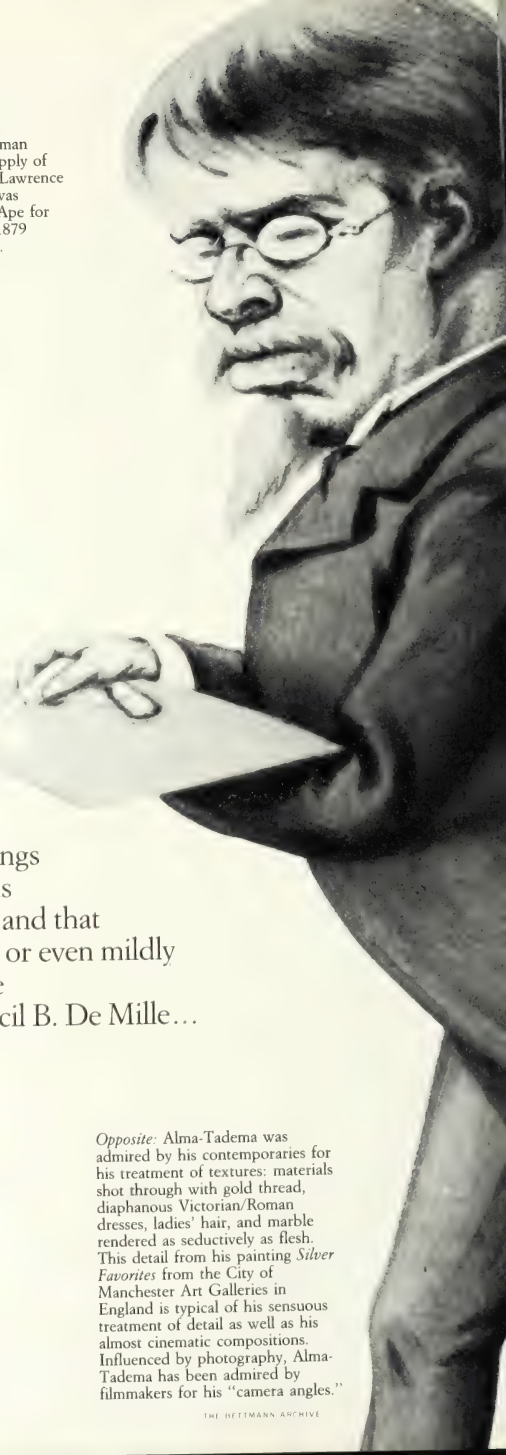


This screen, an unusual six-fold conversation piece by Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema painted about 1870, portrays the family of his future wife, Laura Epps. She stands to the right, in profile. Done in the course of giving Laura Epps lessons in painting, it became a record of their courtship. The screen is at the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, but will be shown at the National Gallery in March and later at Yale as part of an exhibition, of screens.

COURTESY VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM

RATOR: ALMA-TADEMA





Right: A Dutchman with a ready supply of wisecracks, Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema was caricatured by Ape for *Vanity Fair* in 1879 as a genial host.

The transformation of Laurens Alma-Tadema, born in 1836 the son of an obscure provincial notary in Dronryp in Northern Holland, into Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema, O.M., R.A., one of the pillars of the Victorian art establishment, provides a theme ripe for oversimplification. It is true that Ruskin was often uncomplimentary, that Alma-Tadema's career was promoted by Ernest "Prince" Gambart, the greatest art impresario of the age, and that he became very rich. That most of Alma-Tadema's paintings were set in a luxurious reconstructed Rome, and that many are sentimental or even mildly erotic, has led to facile comparisons with Cecil B. De Mille, to accusations of hypocrisy and even to post-Freudian hints of prurience. Alma-Tadema's work as a designer of furniture and interiors has attracted little attention.

From the beginning Alma-Tadema was extremely sensitive to his working environment. In Antwerp in 1859, "full of enthusiasm for dark ornament and barbaric splendor of color, he tinted his walls with Pompeian ornament on a ground of red and black." The quotation comes from Edmund Gosse, writing in 1883 on the basis of information from Alma-Tadema himself. Gosse's account further relates that after Alma-Tadema had moved to Brussels in 1865 he took a "dark studio, and the result is to be seen in the deep tones of *Catullus at Lesbia's* [1865] and *The Mummy* [1867]. He became himself aware of the error into which he had fallen, and in 1868 he deliberately repainted his studio in white and pale green before beginning to work on the *Pyrrhic Dance,* which is the first of his modern works and which displays a startling contrast to his previous combinations of brown and fuscous tones."

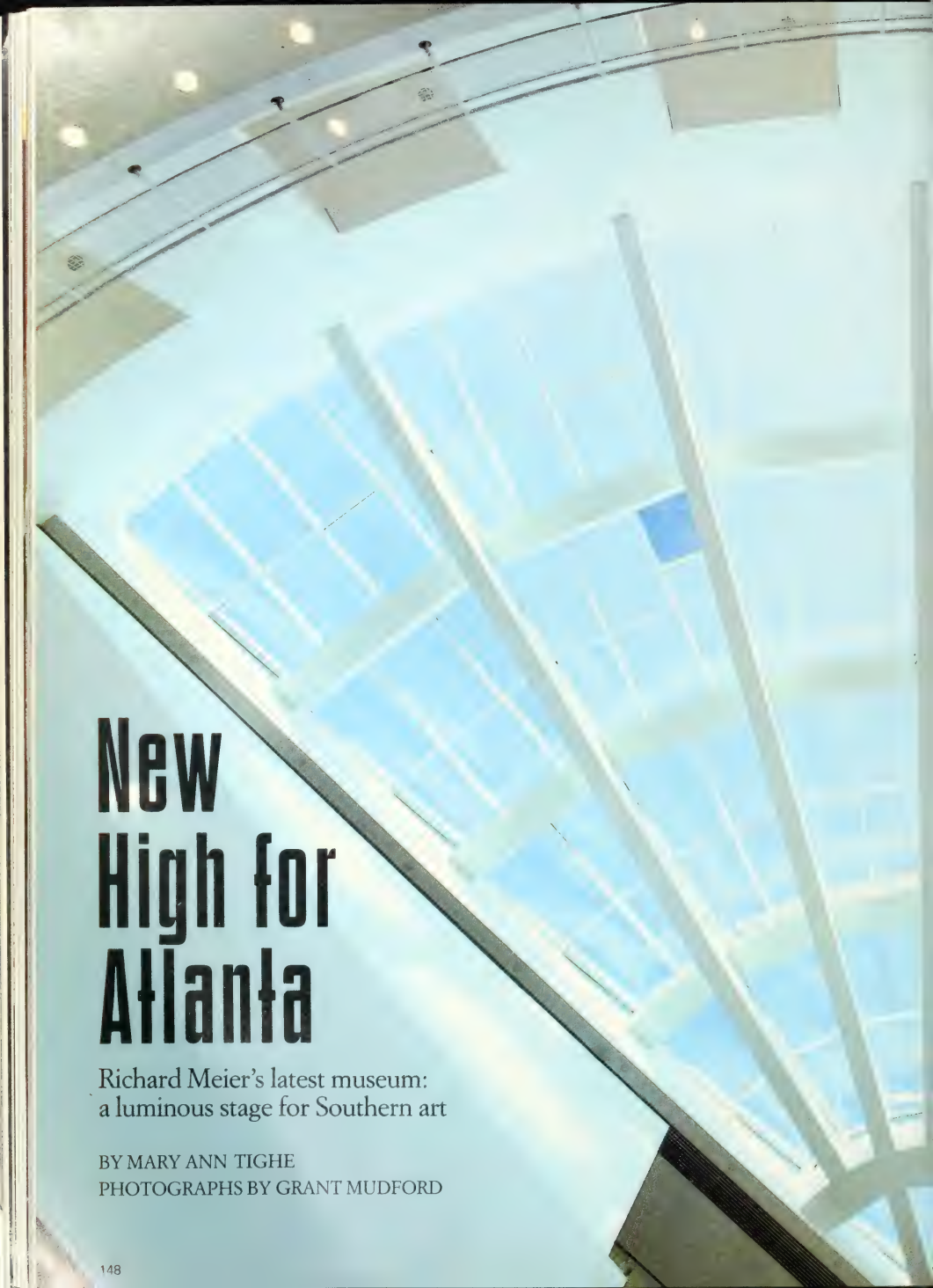
That most of Alma-Tadema's paintings were set in a luxurious reconstructed Rome, and that many are sentimental or even mildly erotic has led to facile comparisons with Cecil B. De Mille...

The *Pyrrhic Dance* was shown at the Royal Academy in 1869. Its success, his own illness, and the death of his first wife were among the factors that led to Alma-Tadema's decision to settle in London. On December 26, 1869, at a dance given by the

Opposite: Alma-Tadema was admired by his contemporaries for his treatment of textures: materials shot through with gold thread, diaphanous Victorian/Roman dresses, ladies' hair, and marble rendered as seductively as flesh. This detail from his painting *Silver Favorites* from the City of Manchester Art Galleries in England is typical of his sensuous treatment of detail as well as his almost cinematic compositions. Influenced by photography, Alma-Tadema has been admired by filmmakers for his "camera angles."

THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE





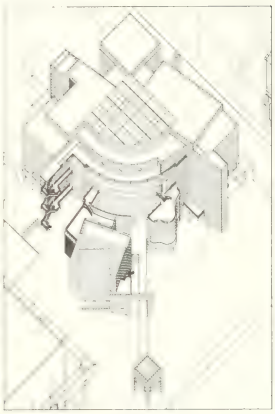
New High for Atlanta

Richard Meier's latest museum: a luminous stage for Southern art

BY MARY ANN TIGHE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY GRANT MUDFORD



All galleries and offices radiate off this wedge-shaped, skylighted atrium, the central public space of Richard Meier's High Museum of Art. After the conservation-dictated artificial illumination of the exhibition areas, the natural light refreshes the eye and renews the visitor's energy.



The Museum's façade strikes the principal themes in Meier's orchestration of geometry and light. Window and wall squares play against the swirling circles of the three exhibition levels. The low granite entrance on the far right offers a dramatic lead-in to the radiant core of the building

During the past two decades, a strange phenomenon was experienced by art lovers as they walked through American museums located outside New York. Entering a cultural edifice in an urban or rural setting, a warm, temperate, or cool climate, north, east, south, or west, the visitor was overwhelmed by a sense of déjà vu. Large, white, pristine rooms, devoid of decoration save for tastefully colored pipes or girders, were filled with large, familiar paintings, each bearing the signature of one of the leading practitioners of Formalism, Minimalism, Pop Art, or Photo Realism. It was as though there was really only one museum in the United States, its multiples transported by hologram to all parts of the map. Unfortunately, however, it also seemed that the farther these replicas were from their sources—the commercial galleries and artists' lofts of SoHo—the fainter the transmission. Perhaps it was the juxtaposition of the scene outside the museum with the one inside—often a contrast to local design traditions—or maybe there just wasn't enough first-quality work of the same small circle of artists to go around, but the consequences of the flight from provincialism by many of this nation's arts professionals and supporters were alien and alienating exhibition environments and collections projecting no particular conviction. The cost of these temples of collective culture frequently included the abandonment of one's own creative community.

Whether because of a conscious decision, an instinctive response to a changed zeitgeist, or Sunbelt self-confidence, Atlanta's new High Museum of Art, which opened October 15, has been constructed upon a different set of principles. This fresh approach to the creation of an American museum is exemplified by the design of the new building and by two collections to be shown for the first time as part of the High's group of inaugural exhibitions. Curator of twentieth-century art, Peter Morrin is aware of the radical point of view guiding this undertaking: "[Architect] Richard Meier's design is going to be controversial. He has significantly broken with the fifties and sixties notion of the clean, white, infinitely flexible space. The spaces here are charged, dynamic. There is a forcing of groupings that puts pressure on the curator, but in the best possible way. I think one goal of installation design is to create a *(Text continued on page 216)*











Throughout the Museum, Meier's views to the outside world remind the gallery-goer of the institution's relationship to the city. And yet the sense of human scale is imbedded in the very fabric of the building by the architect's use of the three-foot square, repeated in porcelain enamel, granite, and glass





ANCIENT INSPIRATIONS

A recycled building's neo-Egyptian façade guides an apartment's decoration by Robert K. Lewis

BY MARGARET MORSE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK ROSS



Left: The living room leads to a columned loggia two steps up. *Above:* Seen from the loggia's terrace, a terra-cotta Pharaoh on the 1926 façade.

It was an architectural relic on New York's West 70th Street—once a temple of the fraternal Knights of Pythias, now The Pythian condominiums. The neo-Egyptian polychrome decoration on the façade—apparent from the high, set-back apartment that Robert K. Lewis was called in to decorate—inspired his choice of ancient Mediterranean motifs, art, and terra-cotta coloring within.

Lewis inherited the layout from the architectural firm of the residential conversion—David Gura. By emphasizing or adding various floor and ceiling levels, Lewis created a dramatic feeling of progression that draws the eye onward and visually enlarges the two-room space. He had an existing balcony overlooking the dining



Opposite: In the dining area, ancient art in bronze and terra cotta—all from Royal-Athena Galleries—and freeblown goblets by Simon Pearce. *Left:* On the bed, a Missoni patchwork rug from Saporiti Italia, Descamps linens. Nineteenth-century Austrian chest from York House Antiques.

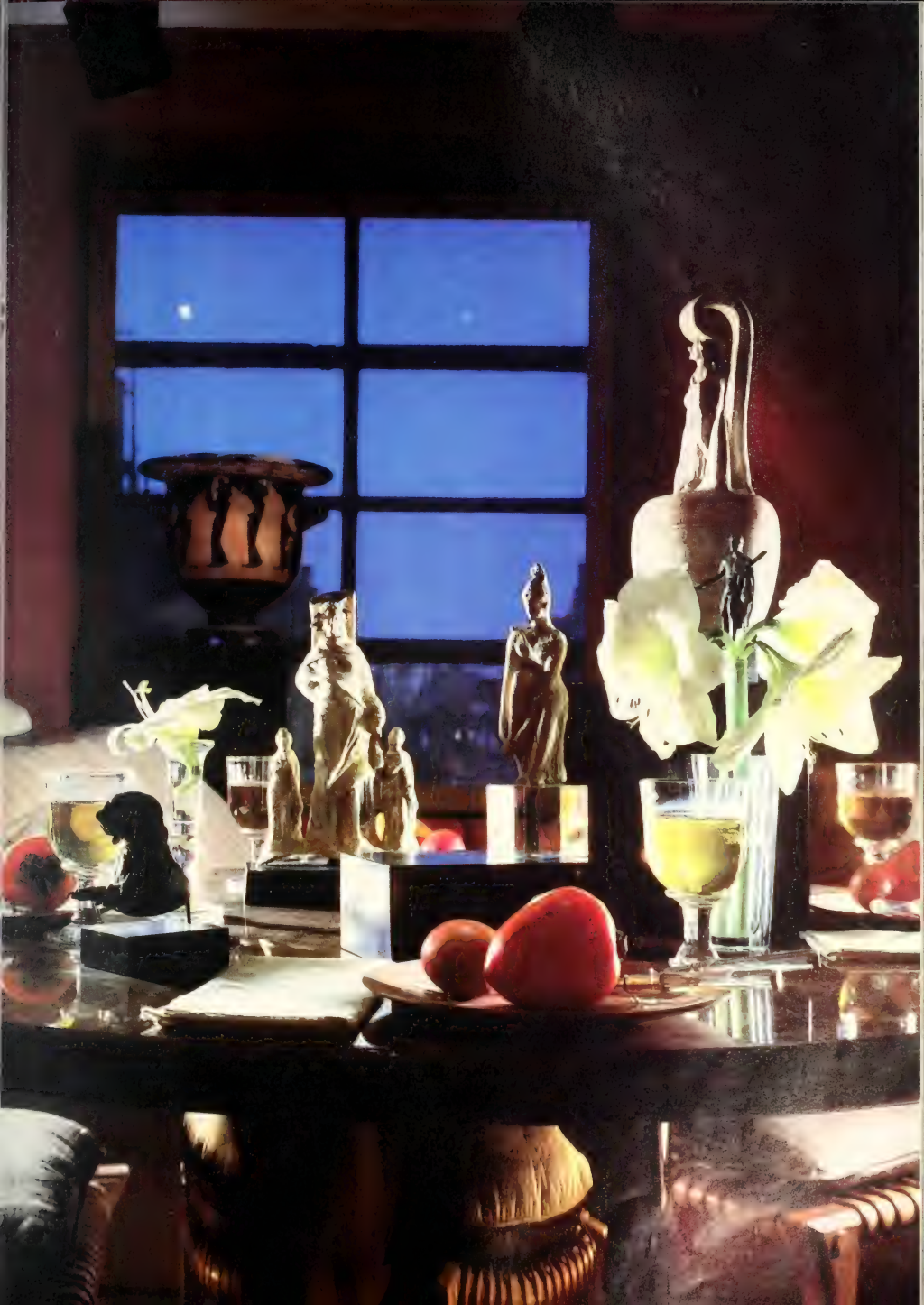


Griffin guards the doorway lintel of the former Pythian Temple, by architect Thomas Lamb.

area painted white, as a bright "bridge" guests would pass under from the foyer. Opposite it, where a window and terrace door provide cross-ventilation, he installed a raised loggia with columns—fiberboard with sand swirled into the paint to simulate stone. Trompe-l'oeil artist Robert Jackson painted the loggia wall to match the marble top of the custom dining table. In the bedroom, Lewis played up an idiosyncratic trio of ceiling heights (a legacy from the building's former life) with three shades of paint and carpet, progressively lighter toward the window "to open up the room toward the light."

The interior wears its ancient mantle lightly. In the dining area, human figures on a fifth-century B.C. Attic krater echo those on the 1950 Wedgwood terra-cotta plates. Canvas-covered banquettes, a cocktail table of faux-granite laminate, and coir matting provide a plain, respectful background for the grander elements of the scheme—such as the accent pillows in rich, iridescent Fortuny patterns. The bronze stool and walnut dining chairs with latticed-leather seats hark back centuries, for they are Robsjohn-Gibbings adaptations (available from Gretchen Bellinger) of furniture depicted on venerable Greek vases, like those in the living room's nineteenth-century lithographs. Bed curtains of Bellinger plissé silk sway ethereally in the slightest breeze. □

Produced by Carolyn Sollis



Edgar Allan Poe's PHILOSOPHY of FURNITURE



In Burton's *Gentleman's Magazine* of May 1840, the American master of the macabre offers his unconventional ideas on the arrangement of houses

In the internal decoration, if not in the external architecture of their residences, the English are supreme. The Italians have but little sentiment beyond marbles and colours. In France, *meliora probant, deteriora sequuntur*—the people are too much a race of gad-abouts to maintain those household proprieties of which, indeed, they have a delicate appreciation, or at least the elements of a proper sense. The Chinese and most of the eastern races have a warm but inappropriate fancy. The Scotch are *poor* decorists. The Dutch have, perhaps, an indeterminate idea that a curtain is not a cabbage. In Spain they are *all* curtains—a nation of hangmen. The Russians do not furnish. The Hottentots and Kickapoos are very well in their way. The Yankees alone are preposterous.

How this happens, it is not difficult to see. We have no aristocracy of blood, and having therefore as a natural, and indeed as an inevitable thing, fashioned for ourselves an aristocracy of dollars, the *display of wealth* has here to take the place and perform the office of the heraldic display in monarchical countries. By a transition readily understood, and which might have been as readily foreseen, we have been brought to merge in simple *show* our notions of taste itself.

To speak less abstractly. In England, for example, no mere parade of costly appurtenances would be so likely as with us, to create an impression of the beautiful in re-

spect to the appurtenances themselves—or of taste as regards the proprietor—this for the reason, first, that wealth is not, in England, the loftiest object of ambition as constituting a nobility; and secondly, that there, the true nobility of blood, confining itself within the strict limits of legitimate taste, rather avoids than affects that mere costliness in which a *parvenu* rivalry may at any time be successfully attempted.

The people *will* imitate the nobles, and the result is a thorough diffusion of the proper feeling. But in America, the coins current being the sole arms of the aristocracy, their display may be said, in general, to be the sole means of the aristocratic distinction, and the populace, looking always upward for models, are insensibly led to confound the two entirely separate ideas of magnificence and beauty. In short, the cost of an article of furniture has at length come to be, with us, nearly the sole test of its merit in a decorative point of view—and this test, once established, has led the way to many analogous errors, readily traceable to the one primitive folly.

There could be nothing more directly offensive to the eye of an artist than the interior of what is termed in the United States—that is to say, in Appallachia—a well-furnished apartment. Its most usual defect is a want of keeping. We speak of the keeping of a room as we would of the keeping of a picture—for both the picture and the room are amenable to those undeviating principles which regulate all varieties of art; and very nearly the same laws by which we decide on the higher merits of a painting, suffice for decision on the adjustment of a chamber.

A want of keeping is observable sometimes in the character of the several pieces of furniture, but generally in their colours or modes of adaptation to use. *Very* often the eye is offended by their inartistic arrangement. Straight lines are too prevalent—too uninterruptedly continued—or clumsily interrupted at right angles. If curved lines occur, they are repeated into unpleasant uniformity. By undue precision, the appearance of many a fine apartment is utterly spoiled.

Curtains are rarely well disposed, or well chosen in respect to other decorations. With formal furniture, curtains are out of place; and an extensive volume of drapery of any kind is, under any circumstance, irreconcilable with good taste—the proper quantum, as well as the proper adjustment, depending upon the character of the general effect.

Carpets are better understood of late than of ancient days, but we still very frequently err in their patterns and colours. The soul of the apartment is the carpet. From it are deduced not only the hues but the forms of all objects incumbent. A judge at common law may be an ordinary man; a good judge of a carpet *must be* a genius. Yet we have heard discoursing of carpets, with the air "*d'un mouton qui rêve,*" fellows who should not and who could not be entrusted with the management of their own *mustaches*. Every one knows that a large floor *may* have a covering of large figures, and that a small one *must* have a covering of small—yet this is not all the knowledge in the world. As regards texture, the Saxony is alone admissible. Brussels is the preterpluperfect tense of fashion, and Turkey is taste in its dying agonies. Touching pattern—a carpet should *not* be bedizzened out like a Riccaree Indian—all red chalk, yellow ochre, and cock's feathers. In brief—distinct grounds, and vivid circular or cycloid figures, *of no meaning,* are here Median laws. The abomination of flowers, or representations of well-known objects of any kind, should not be endured within the limits of Christendom. Indeed, whether on carpets, or curtains, or tapestry, or ottoman coverings, all upholstery of this nature should be rigidly Arabesque. As for those antique floor-cloths still occasionally seen in the dwellings of the rabble—cloths of huge, sprawling, and radiating devises, stripe-interspersed, and glorious with all hues, among which no ground is intelligible—these are but the wicked invention of a race of time-servers and money-lovers—children of Baal and worshippers of Mammon—Benthams, who, to spare thought and economize fancy, first cruelly invented the Kaleidoscope, and then established joint-stock companies to twirl it by steam.



lare is a leading error in the philosophy of American household decoration—an error easily recognised as deduced from the perversion of taste just specified. We are violently enamoured of gas and of glass. The former is totally inadmissible within doors. Its harsh and unsteady light offends. No one having both brains and eyes will use it. A mild, or what artists term a cool light, with its consequent warm shadows, will do wonders for even an ill-furnished apartment. Never was a more lovely thought than that of the astral lamp. We mean, of course, the astral lamp proper—the lamp of Argand, with its original plain ground-glass shade, and its tempered and uniform moonlight rays. The cut-glass shade is a weak invention of the enemy. The eagerness with which we have adopted it, partly on account of its *flashiness,* but principally on account of its *greater cost,* is a good commentary on the proposition with which we began. It is not too much to say, that the deliberate employer of a cut-glass shade, is either radically deficient in taste, or blindly subservient to the caprices of fashion. The light proceeding from one of these gaudy abominations is unequal, broken, and painful. It alone is sufficient to mar a world of good effect in the furniture subjected to its influence. Female loveliness, in especial, is more than one-half disenchanted beneath its evil eye.

In the matter of glass, generally, we proceed upon false principles. Its leading feature is *glitter*—and in that one word how much of all that is detestable do we express! Flickering, unquiet lights, are *sometimes* pleasing—to children and idiots *(Text continued on page 210)*

A PASSION FOR PURITY

Betty Stewart honors the tradition of Santa Fe by designing an adobe house in the old style and building it in the old way

BY ELAINE GREENE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NORMAN McGRATH











People who don't understand Spanish Colonial architecture try to fake it by working crudely. The antique timbers that hold my house together were formed by a broadax, and they were made carefully in as refined a manner as the tool permitted. That is the difference between false and true tradition," says Betty Stewart. As an architectural designer and builder and an almost lifelong resident of New Mexico, she is a stubborn purist: not the kind who is never satisfied, but one who struggles, achieves, and enjoys the results. This house, which she created for herself two years ago and which continues to delight her, will be her home until someone makes her an urgent, heartfelt, and unrefusable offer. Then she will sell it—it has happened before—and build herself another. The firm that she heads, Stewart Construction, has been building houses for twelve years.

Betty Stewart was born in Texas in the twenties but

Preceding pages: From the porch in front of the house, a view of cottonwoods, piñons, sagebrush, and snow-covered mountains is framed by salvaged and refinished local octagonal posts. Old bricks are set in sand without mortar, as they are throughout the house. *Left:* In the living room, characteristic *vigas* (beams) are recycled from nearby ruins almost two hundred years old. Tables are New Mexico antiques. *Above:* A living-room window, set like all the others into a deep opening, has a sill of old brick, a splayed reveal.



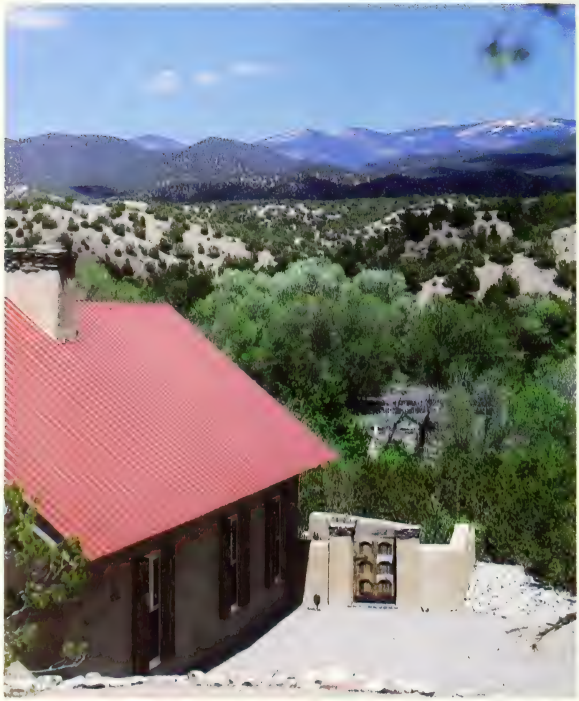
Opposite: A long hallway, whose lack of clutter is as traditional as its form, stretches to the right and left of the front door of the U-shaped house. At one end is the living room (seen here); at the other, the master bedroom. *This page:* The master bedroom, like the living room, has one tall window under a front gable. Pine table is a local antique; Mexican chairs have flower-and-leaf carving.





As do four other major rooms in the house, the master bedroom contains a simple traditional raised-hearth fireplace that brings warmth and cheer when the mountain air turns chilly. Adobe walls within the house are as thick as those on the perimeter, making doorways satisfyingly deep. New doors are traditional; new pine headboard follows the old spirit, if not the letter.





Above: A pitched roof covered by long-lasting tin—one of three over Betty Stewart's house—represents a stylistic revival that she has spearheaded in New Mexico, where most adobes have flat roofs. Chimney tops and gateposts are crowned by flat stones laid without mortar. *Opposite:* Carved birds appear in every room. This one by a fine Spanish-style pine bench in the entrance hall is a Canadian Indian example. Others in the collection are local, old and new; some come from New England.

was raised on a cattle ranch in the rugged country of eastern New Mexico. All the buildings on the old ranch were adobe, and the material and building forms are part of her earliest, strongest sense of shelter—an irrevocable imprinting that is both emotional and aesthetic. Attending school in Tesuque, bordering Santa Fe in the north-central part of the state, she fell in love with its landscape: the distant Sangre de Cristo mountains, the rolling pine-studded hills closer in, the river, the cottonwoods. Eventually, both at work and at home, Betty Stewart combined her favorite kind of building with her favorite setting; and now some dozen-and-a-half Stewart houses enrich the Tesuque area, and more are in progress.

The Spanish who came hundreds of years ago knew they were in the right arid climate to transplant their native adobe architecture, and adobe is Betty Stewart's building material. Local sandy-clay loam is the main ingredient; foot-treading is the method of mixing the mud. "Treading is the old way," Betty Stewart says, "and it is the only way to get a brick that will not break." The standard brick measures 10 by 14 by 4 inches and is sun-dried individually in a box form. Miss Stewart builds a traditional double wall: 10 inches of adobe, a 6-inch air space with insulation, then another 10 inches of adobe. If this sounds like solar technology, that is because it is, and its history is very long. "Traditional passive-solar architecture blunts temperature extremes by the use of mass and by facing the building in the right direction," she explains.

Descendants of the original Spanish colonists still live in the hills around Santa Fe. Some forty of these tradition-proud people make up Betty Stewart's building crew. They do not submit to her perfectionism so much as embrace it; they too are purists, sharing her pleasure in historic authenticity and expert craftsmanship.

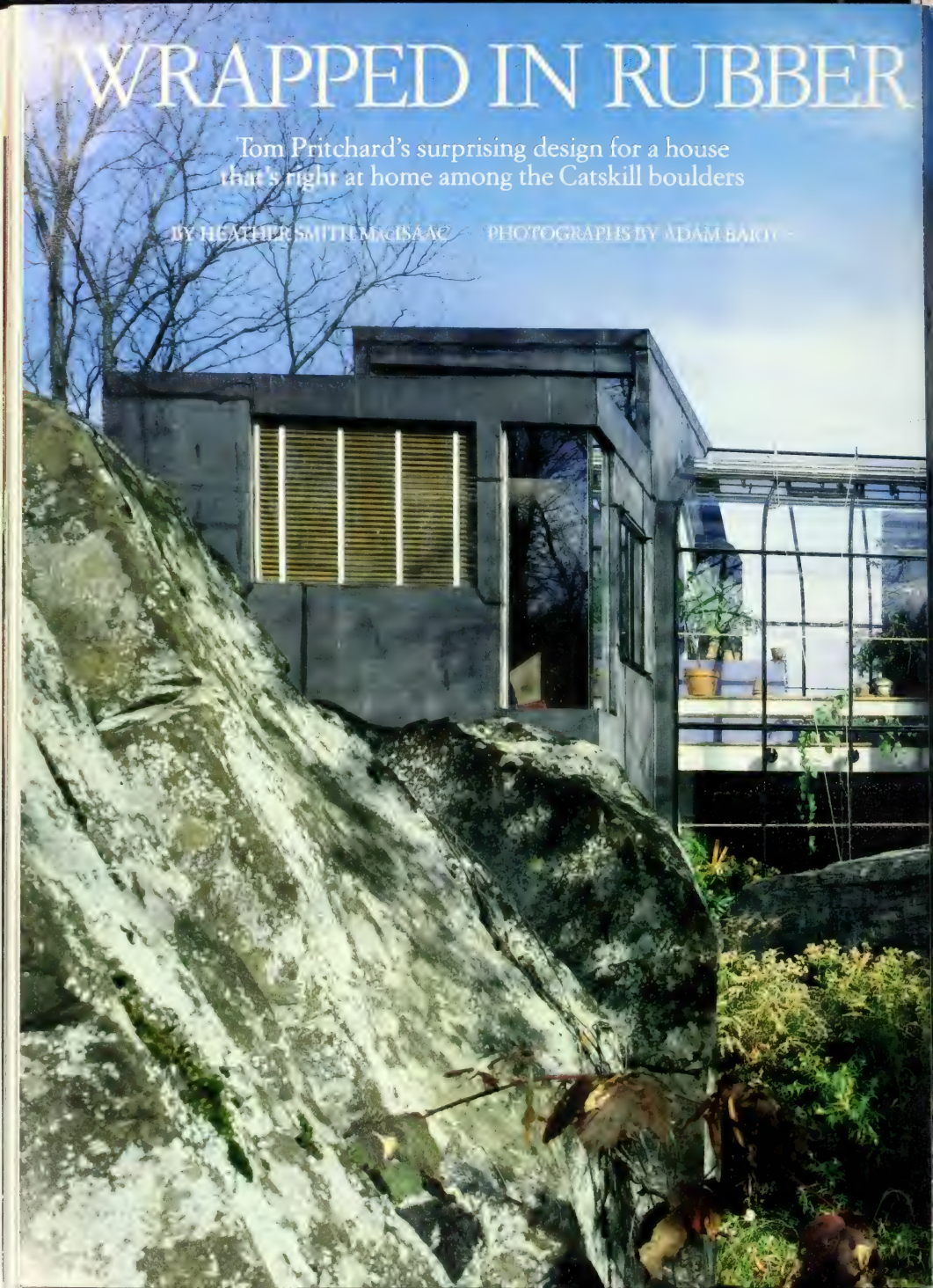
Almost single-handedly *(Text continued on page 206)*



WRAPPED IN RUBBER

Tom Pritchard's surprising design for a house that's right at home among the Catskill boulders

BY HEATHER SMITH MacISAAC PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADAM BARTH





Strong volumes of the west façade, sheathed in dark gray rubber, hold their own against the masses of native rock. Two-story greenhouse-kitchen links guest bedroom–garage wing (at left) and stair cylinder, master bedroom–living room wing (right).



When the late dancer and choreographer Eugene Loring returned East in 1979 to settle in the foothills of the Catskills, he knew he wanted to build a place as remarkable as the Richard Neutra house he had commissioned and lived in for many years in Hollywood. He also knew that, in keeping with the change in scenery and climate, he needed a departure from the Neutra house. But he went to designer Tom Pritchard with no fixed design ideas, only three requests—that the house have a dance studio, that it be comfortable, and that it be extraordinary.

The provocative design Pritchard presented to Loring and his friend Alan Boehmer, who still lives in the house and is one of Pritchard's partners in Mädderlake, Ltd., of New York, departed not only from the International Style of which Neutra was a master, but also from the current popular style Pritchard finds "so often flat and stylish without being truly substantive." Pritchard's decision to concentrate on forms rather than details produced an unusual grouping of volumes that possesses a monolithic quality as powerful as that of the huge rocks upon which the house is built. From the road, the house is like nothing the Catskills have ever seen before. Its façade is foreboding, offering no clues to life on the inside. Passersby may glimpse the meadow and woods to which the house opens on three sides, but only those who enter can see that Pritchard's rocky inspiration stops scarcely two feet short of the glass expanses of the west façade.

The construction of the house was as much a departure as the design—Pritchard interviewed fourteen contractors. "I didn't even show the drawings to the first thirteen; but the fourteenth, Bob Lavaggi of Woodstock, New York, thought it was all possible; he had studied sculpture." Using only simple native materials and construction methods, Lavaggi succeeded in meeting the demands of assembling the unusual shapes on a small budget. His imaginative skills were decidedly put to the test, though, when Pritchard asked him to join and wrap the forms with thin rubber roofing material, something never done in residential construction and never before applied to walls. The dark-gray membrane effectively sealed the structure and made the variety of shapes one, creating the

Only those who enter the house can see that Pritchard's rocky inspiration stops scarcely two feet short of the glass expanses of the west façade



Above: Once exclusively a dance studio, the biggest room in the house is now home to other creative activities as well as parties and overnight guests. Clerestory windows bathe the walls with warm, even light. *Opposite:* A water garden, festive with lilies, adjoins master-bedroom balcony, which overlooks the meadow and hills beyond the studio.



Wide pine floors, willow furniture, a rag rug, and the green and red colors taken from the landscape soften the living room's otherwise modern forms. Antique horse tricycle in background was brought back from France.





The house "lets every day occur; each window edits the landscape"

Right: Second-story master bedroom resembles a luxurious treehouse, complete with elevated fireplace, water garden, balcony, and moonlit nights. *Left:* Gray tile in master bath picks up where outer rubber membrane ends, just as bathtub extends water garden. *Below:* Lavender stairwell leads up from master bedroom to a parapet for viewing the countryside.

natural yet vigorous presence Pritchard had been aiming for.

While the house is severe in its outer form, the interiors are intimate and inviting. Except for the studio, the rooms and passageways are small and varied, having been scaled to Loring's five-foot-four-inch height and appreciation of the movement and progression of spaces. Yet, although it was designed for a specific sensibility, the house seems capable of adapting to any resident's proclivities. Inside, it is alive with the rich colors, textures, and smells that reflect Boehmer's love of art and antiques, horticulture, and cooking. Boehmer is content being in the house alone, for there is a range of cozy places to tuck into, or in the company of a multitude of houseguests whom he can put up in the studio. Best of all, he says, is the way the house "lets every day occur. I'm always stopping en route from room to room; each window edits the landscape. Looking at the rocks and wildlife through the kitchen window, for example, mesmerizes me. It's the first place I've lived where I haven't minded doing the dishes." □

Produced by Kaaren Parker Gray









Above: A watercolor by Serebriakoff that now belongs to Michael Tree of the double-height hall at Ditchley, the house Mrs. Lancaster (then Mrs. Ronald Tree) renovated just before the war. *Opposite:* The hall at Haseley Court, Oxfordshire, Mrs. Lancaster's home in the fifties and sixties, brims with real life. *Overleaf, left:* The window side of Mrs. Lancaster's famous "butter yellow" drawing room in London. *Overleaf, right:* The hallway into the big yellow drawing room, Elizabethan portrait of Mary Fitton over a bookcase from Chiswick House.

Nancy Lancaster, without ever setting out to do such a thing, defined a way of life as well as a way of arranging a house that for years has inspired decorators on both sides of the Atlantic. After World War II when she bought the London decorating firm of Colefax from Sibyl Colefax, her views became somewhat institutionalized through her relationship with John Fowler, who managed the firm. Mrs. Lancaster worked with Fowler on a variety of projects, the most well-known of which were her own houses. Incredibly, the English have recognized her talent with their most precious of institutions—the country house—right from the start. And since the twenties what Nancy Lancaster was doing to a room in Northamptonshire has been copied in Virginia, New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut, and in the second and third generations of the copy in suburban cottages and even in city apartments all over the country.

There is a much-published list of what John Fowler and Mrs. Lancaster liked that always runs more or less like this: old chintzes—not just old patterns redone, but chintz twenty or a hundred years old; English lacquer and painted furniture; three-toned painted paneling or trompe l'oeil to create the illusion of architectural detail when there is none; cotton duck and mattress ticking used for slipcovers; rush matting; curtains trimmed with fringe, tassels, old braid, and cord with eighteenth-century pelmets; unlined taffeta curtains; color schemes of



GERRY MOORE



yellow and beige—a beige that was the color of stone or snuff—as well as soft dull greens used with an azalea red and a gray chalky white they called "Ditchley white"; memorabilia tucked in around the edges of a room to prevent "good" furniture from looking either perfect or nouveau riche. But it's the houses that really tell the tale of Mrs. Lancaster's ideas on decoration as well as of the twists and turns in her own life. Unlike many women who get intensely involved with houses and possessions, Mrs. Lancaster always had a life in mind when she set about her work. Her story began in Virginia, and no one can tell it the way she can.

"Mirador was the house I've loved the most. It was my grandfather's house and I was born there. There was always a great deal of fun going on—laughter, games of truth, tears, and beautiful aunts with beaux coming down from all parts of the world to see them. I remember when I was about seven one of my aunts asked me what I wanted to have most in the world, and I said, 'Mirador.' She said, 'Well, if you really want something and stick to it and never change, you'll get it.' You know, I got it. When I lived in it, it had a mellow quality that I was very proud of. It was right out of Jane Austen."

Michael Tree, one of her two sons with Ronald Tree, is an Englishman born in New York. "My mother's love and passion originally was Virginia," he recalls. Her other strong instinct has been to beautify. She admits she's far more interested in houses, objects, and furniture than she is in people. On the whole I have never known my mother to ever forget a piece of furniture, where it was or what happened to it. And yet she never liked straight period decoration. She has always been after an atmosphere."

"I have one talent," announces Mrs. Lancaster. "I can feel a house like most people feel another's personality. The character of the house should stand out, not someone's taste. There's noth-

For over thirty years most of Mrs. Lancaster's London life went on in this large barrel-vaulted "studio" at 22 Avery Row. When guests came for dinner she set round tables at one end of the room. All the favorite possessions from her other houses ended up here: eighteenth-century banquettes, a pair of carved gilded wall sconces, orange stoneware jars, John Piper drawings of Haseley, Elizabethan portraits.



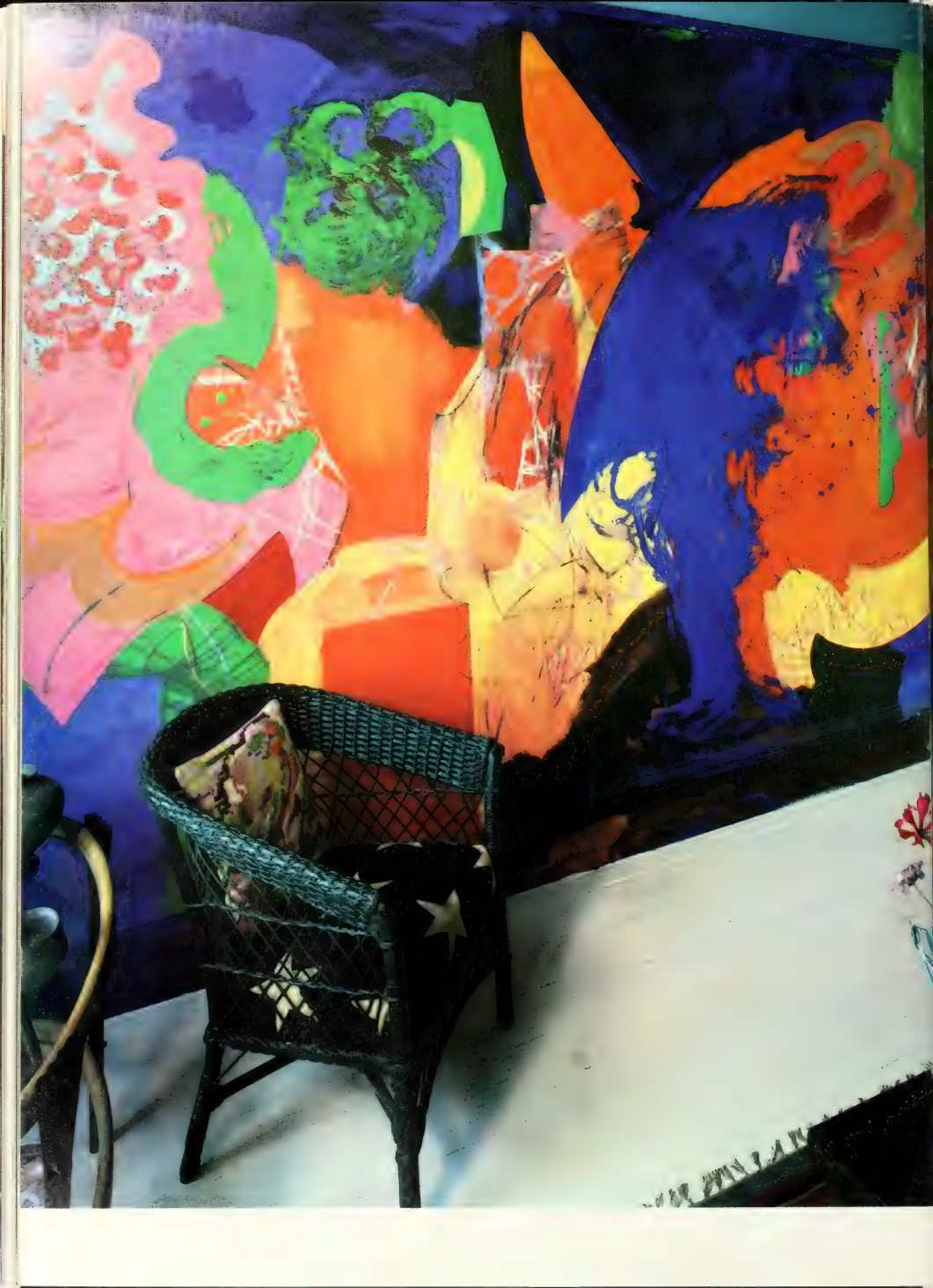
Above: The bath-dressing room of Mrs. Lancaster's London flat with a mirrored arch over the tub, a dressing table in a window that looks into the garden. *Right:* The bedroom, a mixture of good furniture like the gilt-and-lacquer secretary and friendly decorative paintings, lamps, tables. The half-canopy for the bed is a device Mrs. Lancaster often used in small bedrooms.

ing original with me, I'm a percolator. And the thing about decoration is that I'm *again* it. It has sterilized houses in every country. In England people have had houses where things have accumulated for ages. There's a feeling of continuity in these country houses. The mania now for getting everything so perfect and so pretty, it's rubbing the gloss off that. It's a racket, like puffed sleeves. Now all the houses look alike."

Mirador and its thousand-acre farm remained in Mrs. Lancaster's life until 1955 when the socialist government in England forced her to sell it. She had always wanted to live there, but her husbands preferred to live in England. But it is Mrs. Lancaster's experience of classical architecture in Virginia—"Palladian mixes" she calls these famous red brick houses—as well as her love of a country household brimming with life that enabled her to feel so at home in England. Perhaps no American but a Virginian who loved country life more than city life in the same way the English always have could have settled in as effortlessly. What is really amazing is the way English owners of important country houses still quote Nancy Lancaster. Her knack for creating an attractive life in the English countryside was evident immediately. Though the Trees visited Mirador every year, by 1927 Ronald had become joint master of the Pytchley Hunt in Northamptonshire. Ironically, the house they lived in was rented from Claude Lancaster. Though not the most glamorous house she was to live in, it was one of the most successful.

"Kelmarsh was a brick house with stone trim," she remembers. "The red brick gave the Palladian design the warmth it needed in a cold climate. When we *(Text continued on page 224)*







THE ART AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS

For artist Richard Hennessy only living inside one of his paintings would do

BY OLIVIER BERNIER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY OBERTO GILI

In the living room, petit-point cushions by Francine du Plessix Gray and Charles Ludlam keep company with tenth-century Korean earthenware pots.



Above: Looking down on mirrored forties table with flowers in Venini vase next to the artist's own terra-cotta sculpture. *Opposite:* Reflection of living room in mirror-paneled doors of the next room.

Glowing color, the illusion of great space, and splendors all the richer that they owe nothing to materials and everything to art, these are the hallmarks of an apartment that, appropriately, belongs to a painter. When twenty years ago Richard Hennessy moved into the top floor of a tenement on Manhattan's Upper East Side, he was attracted by light and a view: from his windows he looks down on the tracery of bridges around Devil's Gate, that widest section of the East River known for its treacherous currents. But along with that panorama of sky and water the visitor has another, more surprising treat: after walking up what seems like an endless dark staircase with walls of peeling paint, he suddenly finds himself in a room in which walls and ceilings have become mere supports for a large fresco. Most painters are content with hanging a few of their works around their living quarters. For Richard



It is the light seen through the painter's eye that makes the apartment something only an artist could have created

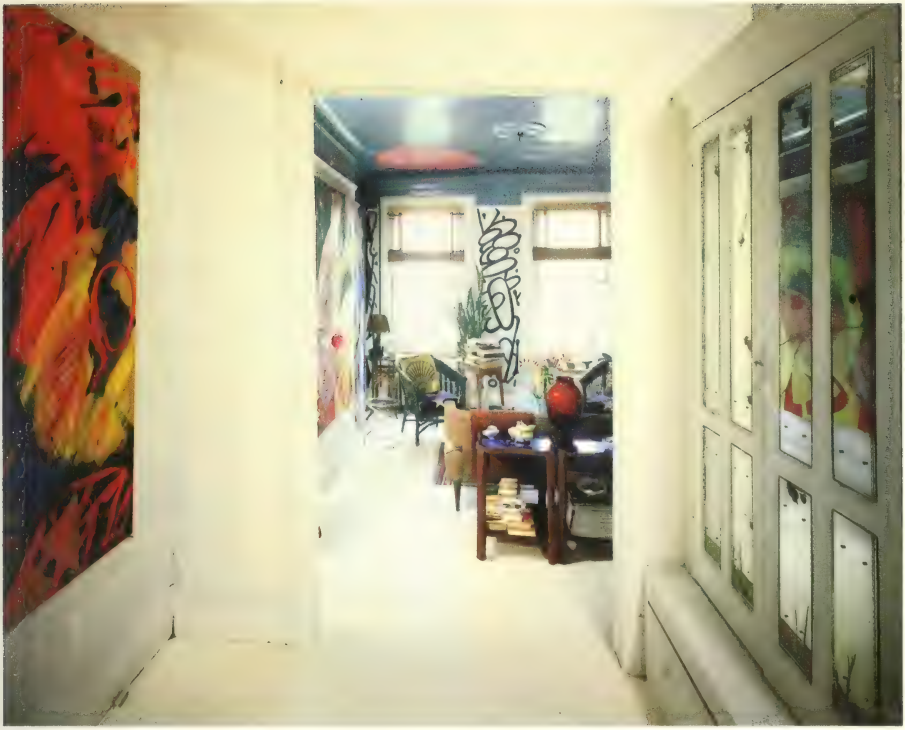




Opposite: A corner of the studio. *Above:* In the living room a twenties cut-wood lamp sits beside canvas and fresco by the artist. *Below:* A twentieth-century faïence vase on American eighteenth-century drop-leaf table.







Above: View through to the living room. *Opposite:* The wall of the artist's studio with a still life made up of reproductions of paintings, fragments of Mexican tablecloths, and photographs of friends including, top right, Henry Geldzahler, Chris Scott, and the artist.

Hennessy, only living inside one of his paintings would do.

It was, in fact, after he had completed a commission that Richard Hennessy realized that what he had done for another he could also do for himself. When, in 1978, The Ridiculous Theatrical Company moved to its new space on Sheridan Square, Charles Ludlam, its founder, director, leading man, and author asked Hennessy to decorate a small ticket-selling lobby, the staircase that leads down to the auditorium, and the large hall that precedes it. The results were dazzling: bold color, inventive spaces, breath-taking trompe l'oeil. When, a few days later, Henry Geldzahler called and told Hennessy that he was entranced by what he had just seen, he added, "Why don't you give yourself a present and fresco your own apartment?"

The result is an unconventional, unexpected space where nothing has been left as it was. Set off by a white-painted



Above: Among the objects on the shelves, from top: Venini harlequin, Art Deco plate, bargepot with a tiny teapot for a cover, eighteenth-century Chinese cranes and a plate, forties palm-tree plates, a yellow cookie jar.
Opposite: Another view of the living room. A Royal Doulton flambéware urn is on the blue-glass forties table.

floor and a deep-blue ceiling enlivened in a corner by a pink sun, the longest unbroken wall becomes both spectacle and landscape, a panorama of rich intense blues, pinks, reds, yellows, and greens in which form jostles form to create the illusion of depth both inwards and outwards: while Hennessy's fresco opens up the wall, it also moves forth into our very space so that the spectator becomes a part of the pageant before him; then, too, there is an infinite amount of detail, small, intense areas where, often, several colors meet to create little still lifes.

After the intensity of this composition, the two smaller walls come as a most welcome surprise: large, three-dimensional black abstract forms float on a pure white ground. Powerful in their way, they engage the visitor in an altogether different but equally deep space. That all this should take place in a small, originally uninteresting room may seem surprising at first; in fact, Hennessy has gone through two rigorous forms of training: music, at the Eastman School of Music—he was a pianist until his early twenties—and art history, at the Institute of Fine Arts. He studied and understood architecture as well as painting and admires the great Venetians, *(Text continued on page 198)*

This apparently heterogeneous assemblage of objects looks, and is, like a carefully composed still life



THE ART AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS

The apartment is an unconventional, unexpected space where nothing has been left as it was

(Continued from page 196) Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese, Tiepolo, as well as Raphael and Fragonard. "Architecture," he says, speaking of New York apartments, "is full of limitations. Windows are not enough; there must also be windows into one's inner life"—a perfect description of his living-room fresco—"while walls become a garden in bloom. It is up to painting to provide the fine tuning and refine the limited visual experience provided by most architecture."

Hennessy's entire apartment, in fact, answers to the painter's sophisticated eye. Next to the main wall is a white door with five mirrored panels whose reflections give a sense of greater space. The living room contains nine tables, one a rare American eighteenth-century tilt-top; others include one of glass held up by a chrome spiral and blue-mirror, wood-frame forties coffee tables. Add to that two wicker chairs painted dark green and a fifties settee and you have a most unconventional but successful mix, one no decorator would have considered for a second. That all this furniture should entail the presence of a forest of legs doesn't bother Hennessy in the least: conventional sofas block the eye from seeing through the entire space of a room; here, one can look through, under, over, and around so as to leave the volume intact and undistorted. He is quite right, of course: a glance at any eighteenth-century room, as he points out, will amply confirm his theory.

Just as Hennessy's paintings, no matter how ample their sweep, are always rich in detail, so his apartment is full of countless objects. Some are full of transparent color like the Venini vase carefully placed on a blue-mirror table and set off by one of the artist's terra-cotta sculptures. Others combine a harmonious form with a deep, intense hue like the dark red Doulton flambéware urn. There are unexpected pieces: four Korean earthenware pots that date back to the tenth century sit



Richard Hennessy poses at home in bold stripes in front of his work.

on one table; here, rarity combines with the appeal of shape and texture. Elsewhere, an Italian vase made, probably, within the last eighty years stands wreathed in faïence oranges, lemons, and grapes. Clearly, no period, no style is excluded from Hennessy's collections. Indeed, he takes pride in their wide range: "I own," he says, "ceramics from every major ceramic-producing culture in the world—Chinese, Japanese, Persian, French, English, Spanish, German—because they are a museum of brushwork and color"; and he goes on to point out the extraordinary economy of the little strokes that are used to produce the décor: there is so much to learn, he thinks, from an art in which a mere touch of the brush can produce a convincing leaf. And, of course, ceramic provides him with a variety of shiny colored surfaces that reflect the light, so it is no wonder that it is to be found in abundance throughout his apartment.

Hennessy seems to be a born collector who uses his painter's eye to create a setting not unlike his paintings. He wouldn't think of denying it, but, he says, there is more to it than just acquisitiveness. All too often in modern interiors where paintings are the onl ornaments, far from being more im portant because they alone claim atten tion, they become mere décor instead There should, he feels, be a hierarch of objects. Paintings then become th supreme element, but, he feels, object are just as important because they cre ate the contrast that points up the su periority of the canvas; and then, on a more practical note, he adds he alway feels that small objects make a roon seem larger. His rooms are, in fact quite small, but they appear very much larger as the eye, perhaps fooled by the profusion of sometimes tiny objects makes us see the illusion of space.

Putting a great variety of things to gether is not easy, though. Just a few lit tle mistakes and the apartment could take on the air of a thriftshop. No where is Hennessy's ability to avoid that particular pitfall more evident than in his kitchen. The only other large room of the apartment, it also serves as a dining room and there, next to the table whose checkered tablecloth reminds him, Hennessy says, of a Bonnard interior, is a collection of things he is fond of. Two paintings are hung on the wall, the smallest one dated 1974, the largest 1977; above them, in counterpoint, a gray French plate covered with grapes and nuts, dated 1905 and signed F.B. de Blois, balances an English cake plate edged in dark blue and gold with a center image of fruit on a white background.

These visual harmonics continue on the shelves. A French Art Deco plate decorated with swirling fish stands between a Venini harlequin and an English bargepot whose cover is itself a tiny teapot. Then, below, there are two Mexican tiles, a couple of eighteenth-century Chinese cranes posed before a Chinese blue plate of the same period, a vase lavishly festooned with acorns, and a forties lamp, while on the lowest level a green-striped Picassoesque vase stands next to a yellow porcelain cookie jar that *(Continued on page 200)*



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ART AT TOP OF STAIRS

(Continued from page 198) looks like a stack of plates, a toaster complete wit a fifties cover on which rests a piece signed, modern English earthenwa and two plates painted with palm tree pyramids, and the gaudiest of sunset Just why this apparently heteroge neous assemblage looks, and is, like carefully composed still life become evident as one looks farther down the 1983 Hennessy canvas leanin against the wall: the colors of the ob jects are in the paintings and vice versa the different sizes, looks, and sheens o the faïences balance one another jus like the abstract forms so that the en tire setting, transformed into an entit of its own, becomes yet another of Hen nessy's works.

With all its objects, its hangin saucepans, and its butcher's choppin block, the kitchen takes on an intimis character not unlike that of a smal Dutch master painting; but then, on only need look toward the living room through two doorless and very smal spaces, the perspective is unbroken t the windows and their surroundin black-and-white frescoes. A long hall starting in the kitchen, opens into illu sion: the paintings—and reality: the windows—so as to create an apparent ly endless space.

Across the landing, Hennessy's stu dio parallels the apartment. Although of necessity most of its walls must be bare, there is still room for a collage like assemblage of photographs, brushes, and paint-pots, while the floor, once white but now gaily adorned with an array of accidentally dripped paint, adds a random quality to the otherwise austere environment. Of course, the focus of the studio is Hennessy's most recent painting, always an arresting and colorful composition that instantly draws the eye while brilliant daylight floods in through the windows. Most especially here, in the painter's studio, but everywhere and always, it is the ultimate luxury: analyzed in the canvases, reflected off the ceramics, glinting on the glass tables, captive, friend and inspiration, it is the light seen through the painter's eye that makes Richard Hennessy's apartment something only an artist could have created. □

Produced by Nancy Richardson

(Continued from page 146) in the *Art Annual* of 1886, "The style in which it is built is of no particular period." Looking at J. Elmsly Inglis's drawing of the principal entrance we can understand her perplexity. For 17 Grove End Road, with its geometric mosaic, linear ornament, bold fenestration, and willful but imaginative adaptation of classical detailing, would fit happily into a smart Viennese suburb of about 1900, as a not uncharacteristic specimen of the style developed by Otto Wagner in the 1890s. Near Regent's Park in London in 1886 it was a startlingly original performance.

Seventeen Grove End Road was Alma-Tadema's only major architectural work in three dimensions. In 1906 he became the second painter to receive the Royal Gold Medal of the Royal Institute of British Architects (the first had been, inevitably, Lord Leighton, the other most influential painter of the period, in 1894). In his address John Belcher, the president of the Institute, made it clear that the honor was principally in recognition of the architectural learning and invention displayed in Alma-Tadema's paintings. These virtues were spectacularly present in sets for Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* commissioned by Sir Henry Irving in 1880 and finally produced in 1901. The production was a flop, but the scenery was applauded for its scholarly and imaginative reconstruction of Etruscan exteriors and interiors, the latter with an echo of 17 Grove End Road.

The room in that house which aroused most comment was Alma-Tadema's galleried studio, its ceiling plated in aluminum (a new material later favored by Otto Wagner), the Byzantine piano on a dais backed by windows of Mexican onyx, and a great apse with a curved seat with inlaid ends, surmounted by Turkish embroidery and the motto, *Ars longa, Vita brevis*. The seat has disappeared but its appearance can be reconstructed from paintings and by comparison with furniture commissioned from Alma-Tadema in 1884 by Henry Gurdon Marquand. Marquand, aptly described by the German writer Dohme in 1888 as a "New York Croesus," was second president of The Metropolitan Museum of Art and a collector on the grand scale. His mansion at Madison Avenue and 68th Street, designed by Richard L. Hunt, incorporated a Persian Room, a Japanese room, an Arabic Room, and an Hispano-Moorish Room as well as a Greek Drawing Room, which had ceiling paintings by Leighton above the Alma-Tadema furniture. Of this the star item was a Steinway piano incorporating a painting by Sir Edward Poynter above its keyboard. When exhibited in London in 1887 (the rest of the furniture had been shown in 1885) it was described by the *Furniture Gazette* as "one of the most superb specimens of elaborately artistic workmanship it has ever been our good fortune to see in the form of a pianoforte." Included in the sale held in 1903, after Marquand's death in 1902, piano, settees,



Ebony-and-cedar tub chair inlaid with mother-of-pearl. Designed by Alma-Tadema. Victoria & Albert Museum.

chairs, and tables found their way to the lobby of the Martin Beck Theatre in New York, where they remained for some fifty years until auctioned by Sotheby Parke Bernet in 1980.

The quality of Alma-Tadema's designs, which were detailed by W.C. Codman and executed by the London cabinetmakers Johnstone, Norman & Co., is best appreciated in the armchairs, of which one is now in the Victoria & Albert Museum. The main materials are ebony with cedar veneer and raised inlay of boxwood, ivory, and mother-of-pearl, handled with exquisite precision. The "silvery gray" silk covering described by the *Building News* in 1885 proved on investigation to have been a pale ribbed gray-green. This was copied in the recent reupholstery, but embroidery in "Greek red and warm white" was not attempted. The armchair, extremely close to the seat in his studio, is a perfect representation of the style that the *Building News* called "Greek, rendered with Mr. Alma-Tadema's special mannerism, which somewhat resembles the modification prevailing in Pompeii."

Pompeii provided the direct archaeological prototypes for a series of couches depicted in Alma-Tadema's paintings from the late 1860s onwards. In about 1893 he had two executed for his studio, one purchased by the Victoria & Albert Museum in 1971. They were not exact replicas; they lacked headrests and their back legs displayed not Pompeian turning but Egyptian palmettes and lotuses. Massively constructed in wholly unarchaeological mahogany with mother-of-pearl inlay and brass mounts, one was shown at the London 1893 Arts & Crafts Exhibition, alongside metalwork by Henry Wilson and Walter Crane, furniture by C.F.A. Voysey and W.R. Lethaby, stained-glass designs by Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Christopher Whall, and tapestries designed by Edward Burne-Jones and made by Morris & Co. Even in such company it was much admired, being illustrated in the *Builder*, the *Studio*, and the *Cabinet-Maker and Art Furnisher*.

Although Alma-Tadema's works as a designer are not extensive it is clear that he and his contemporaries took them very seriously. But what is their historical significance? Reconstructions of classical interiors form an intermittent series apart, which includes the Pompeian house in Paris designed for Prince Napoleon by Alfred Normand in the late 1850s, the Villa Kerylos on the French Riviera designed by Emmanuel Pontremoli for the archaeologist Theodore Reinach from 1902 to 1907, and, to approach the present, the Getty Museum in Malibu, California, a Pompeian villa and garden opened in 1974—*Spring*, Alma-Tadema's enormous painting of a procession of maidens strewing flowers, is one of the Getty's most popular pictures.

Closer to Townshend House and 17 Grove End Road are the Villa in Munich designed for his own use by the painter Franz von Stuck from 1897 and the house in Berlin designed for the archaeologist Wiegand *(Continued on page 206)*

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CELANESE FORTREL

A PAINTER AS DECORATOR

(Continued from page 201) by Peter Behrens in 1910 to 1913, the one saturated with color and symbolism, the other severe and monochrome with conscious echoes of Schinkel, both once classical in inspiration and personal in expression.

Alma-Tadema's houses also fit into a larger tradition, that of the artist's house. In London, from the 1860s, the houses of ambitious painters and architects often acted both as advertisements of worldly success and as manifestoes of advanced taste. William Morris's Red House in Bexley, designed by Philip Webb in 1859, and William Burges's Tower House on Melbury Road, incomplete on his death in 1881, are Gothic examples. J.J. Stevenson's Red House in Bayswater, which he designed in 1871, and Whistler's White House in Tite Street, designed by E.W. Godwin in 1877, are Queen Anne and aesthetic, respectively. There is even, in the Linley Sambourne house in Stafford Terrace, a surviving middle-class specimen. The development of the Eastlake style, the careers of Tiffany and Lafarge, the decorations in the Vanderbilt and Marquand mansions—all were influenced by such experimental London houses. Alma-Tadema himself must have been impressed above all by Leighton House, designed for Lord Leighton in 1866 by George Aitchison and transformed in 1877 by the addition of an exotic Arab Hall. His employment of Aitchison at Townshend House in 1874 and his later move to 17 Grove End Road may be seen as responses to Leighton's example.

> "As the Sun Colors Flowers So Art Colors Life" was the motto on his bookplate

The ideal of the artist's house inspired the "House For an Art Lover" competition sponsored by the German magazine publisher Alexander Koch in 1901, in which C.R. Mackintosh and M.H. Baillie Scott won distinction, and was realized in the Palais Stoclet in Brussels, designed by Josef Hoffmann in 1905. Alma-Tadema's houses seem down-to-earth by comparison. They were certainly functional. At 17 Grove End Road there was a party for some thirty people every Tuesday, where the guests might include Henry James and, before she married Winston Churchill, Clementine Hozier.

On these occasions Alma-Tadema's amiability, humor, and broken English were bywords. He once terrified the great pianist Paderewski with a mechanical tiger skin. However, the 13,000 books and photographs now at Birmingham University demonstrate the serious professionalism of his researches. These were the basis for creativity, not copyism. Would that the Post Modernists who are now playing so crudely with the classical language of architecture possessed a tithe of his scholarship. Alma-Tadema seems to have had no truck with the Arts & Crafts doctrine, derived from Ruskin, that the craftsman is his own best designer, a fallacy that still infects designers and craftsmen today. Nor does he seem to have been squeamish about paying high prices for rich materials and exquisite workmanship. Perhaps there is a lesson here for modern patrons too easily content with a skimpy slovenliness. "As the Sun Colors Flowers So Art Colors Life" was the sentimental motto on Alma-Tadema's bookplate. Sentimental perhaps, but not inappropriate for an artist who created some of the most refined, luxurious, and original interiors of the late nineteenth century.

The following museums have at least one painting by Alma-Tadema: Chrysler Museum, Norfolk, Va.; Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; The J. Paul Getty Museum, Malibu, Calif.; Philadelphia Museum of Art; Vassar College Art Gallery, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.; Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, Md.; Yale Center for British Art, New Haven, Conn. □

Produced by Nancy Richardson

PASSION FOR PURITY

(Continued from page 168) Betty Stewart has revived the high-ceilinged tin-covered pitched-roof adobe house. She feels the more common flat-roof building is "bastardized" and impractical as well because it needs rain-damage repair every few years. The pitched roofs are double thick to moderate heat and cold. Betty Stewart includes urethane insulation: she is not a purist who sacrifices contemporary comforts. Another Stewart technique is the use of fine-textured gauging plaster to finish interior walls, producing a hard finish with a sheen, similar to the fresco grounds in old Spain. Outside, she finishes with smooth-troweled plaster.



The front of Betty Stewart's symmetrical adobe house. Steps lead through a garden to the *portal* (porch).

Floors of old brick, antique timbers, antique or handcrafted traditional doors, arch-crowned and splayed window reveals, high-hearth fireplaces in every major room, Mexican lantern fixtures: these are some of the authentic details in a Stewart house, seen here in her own. Her personal furnishing style is historically exemplary, too, with its mix of richness and bareness, of comfort and severity, its Spanish Colonial pieces and Spanish Colonial spirit. □ *Produced by Babs Simpson*


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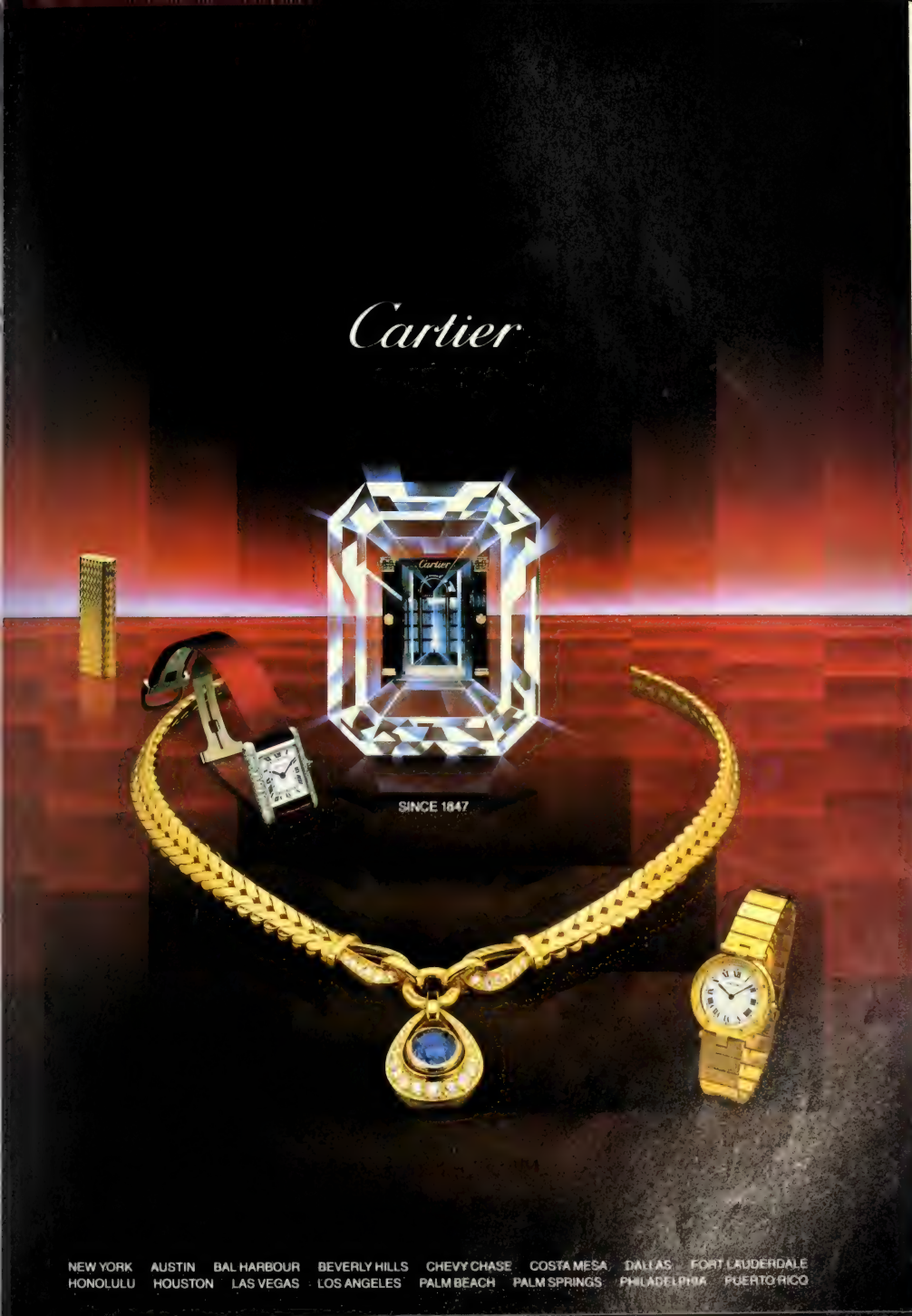
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(Continued from page 159) always so—but in the embellishment of a room they should be scrupulously avoided. In truth, even strong *steady* lights are inadmissible. The huge and unmeaning glass chandeliers, prism-cut, gas-lighted, and without shade, which dangle in our most fashionable drawing-rooms, may be cited as the quintessence of all that is false in taste or preposterous in folly.

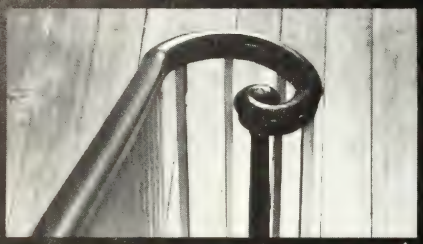
The rage for *glitter*—because its idea has become, as we before observed, confounded with that of magnificence in the abstract—has led us, also, to the exaggerated employment of mirrors. We line our dwellings with great British plates, and then imagine we have done a fine thing. Now the slightest thought will be sufficient to convince any one who has an eye at all, of the ill effect of numerous looking-glasses, and especially of large ones. Regarded apart from its reflection, the mirror presents a continuous, flat, colourless, unrelieved surface—a thing always and obviously unpleasant. Considered as a reflector, it is potent in producing a monstrous and odious uniformity: and the evil is here aggravated, not in merely direct proportion with the augmentation of its sources, but in a ratio constantly increasing. In fact, a room with four or five mirrors arranged at random, is, for all purposes of artistic show, a room of no shape at all. If we add to this evil, the attendant glitter upon glitter, we have a perfect farrago of discordant and displeasing effects. The veriest bumpkin, on entering an apartment so bedizzened, would be instantly aware of something wrong, although he might be altogether unable to assign a cause for his dissatisfaction. But let the same person be led into a room tastefully furnished, and he would be startled into an exclamation of pleasure and surprise.

It is an evil growing out of our republican institutions, that here a man of large purse has usually a very little soul which he keeps in it. The corruption of taste is a portion or a pendant of the dollar-manufacture. As we grow rich, our ideas grow rusty. It is, therefore, not among *our* aristocracy that we must look for the spirituality of a British *boudoir*. But we have seen apartments of Americans of modern means, which, in negative merit at least, might vie with any of the *or-molu'd* cabinets of our friends across the water. Even *now*, there is present to our mind's eye a small and not ostentatious chamber with whose decorations no fault can be found. The proprietor lies asleep on a sofa—the weather is cool—the time is near midnight: we will make a sketch of the room during his slumber.

It is oblong—some thirty feet in length and twenty-five in breadth—a shape affording the best (ordinary) opportunities for the adjustment of furniture. It has but one door—by no means a wide one—which is at one end of the parallelogram, and but two windows, which are at the other. These latter are large, reaching down to the floor—have deep recesses—and open on an Italian *veranda*. Their panes are of a crimson-tinted glass, set in rose-wood framings, more massive than usual. They are curtained within the recess, by a thick silver tissue adapted to the shape of the window, and hanging loosely in small volumes. Without the recess are curtains of an exceedingly rich crimson silk, fringed with a deep network of gold, and lined with silver tissue, which is the material of the exterior blind. There are no cornices; but the folds of the whole fabric (which are sharp rather than massive, and have an airy appearance), issue from beneath a broad entablature of rich giltwork, which encircles the room at the junction of the ceiling and walls. The drapery is thrown open also, or closed, by means of a thick rope of gold loosely enveloping it, and resolving itself readily into a knot; no pins or other such devices are apparent. The colours of the curtains and their fringe—the tints of crimson and gold—appear everywhere in profusion, and determine the *character* of the room. The carpet—of Saxony material—is quite half an inch thick, and is of the same crimson ground, relieved simply by the appearance of gold cord (like that festooning the curtains) slightly relieved above the surface of the *ground,* and thrown upon it in such a manner as to form a succession of short irregular curves—one occasionally overlaying the other. The walls are prepared with a glossy paper of a silver gray tint, spotted with small Arabesque devices of a fainter hue of the prevalent crimson. Many paintings relieve the expanse of the paper. These are chiefly landscapes of an imaginative cast—such as the fairy grottoes of Stanfield, or the lake of the Dismal Swamp of Chapman. There are, nevertheless, three or four female heads, of an ethereal beauty—portraits in the manner of Sully. The tone of each picture is warm, but dark. There are no "brilliant effects." *Repose* speaks in all. Not one is of small size. Diminutive paintings give that *spotty* look to a room, which is the blemish of so many a fine work of Art overtouched. The frames are broad but not deep, and richly carved, without being *dulled* or filagreed. They have the whole lustre of burnished gold. They lie flat on the walls, and do not hang off with cords. The designs themselves are often seen to better advantage in this latter position, but the general appearance of the chamber is injured. But one mirror—and this not a very large one—is visible. In shape it is nearly circular—and it is hung so that a reflection of the person can be obtained from it in none of the ordinary sitting-places of the room. Two large low sofas of rose-wood and crimson silk, gold-flowered, form the only seats, with the exception of two light conversation chairs, also of rose-wood. There is a pianoforte (rose-wood, also), without cover, and thrown open. An octagonal table, formed altogether of the richest gold-threaded marble, is placed near one of the sofas. This is also without cover—the drapery of the curtains has been thought sufficient. Four large and gorgeous Sèvres vases, in which bloom a profusion of sweet and vivid flowers, occupy the slightly rounded angles of the room. A tall candelabrum, bearing a small antique lamp with highly perfumed oil, is standing near the head of my sleeping friend. Some light and graceful hanging shelves, with golden edges and crimson silk cords with gold tassels, sustain two of three hundred magnificently bound books. Beyond these things, there is no furniture, if we except an Argand lamp, with a plain crimson-tinted ground-glass shade, which depends from the lofty vaulted ceiling by a single slender gold chain, and throws a tranquil but magical radiance over all. □


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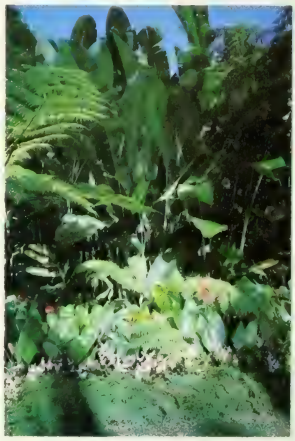
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CHG113

(Continued from page 126) family business. White tropical irises stand like egrets at the cascade's edge, and creamy water lilies, imported from New Jersey, float near a jasmine bush rescued from behind an abandoned greenhouse on the island.

Midway up this long stream of water is an impressive *Strelitzia nicolai*—a white bird-of-paradise. This plant, given to Doña Maria by a friend, is difficult to transplant; its large green leaves and dove-white flowers are testimony to skilled horticulture. Since this is one of the many fine successes in the garden, it is ironic that the *Strelitzia* shelters one of the very few disappointments; a Japanese lotus in one of the cauldrons has stubbornly refused to flower. After years of patience, Doña Maria has decided to move it to a larger pool. Unafraid to reposition a plant to encourage its development, she is confident that the result will soon be a white lotus blossom. And if Doña Maria's confidence is what makes her garden grow, thinks a visitor over a rum old-fashioned back on the veranda of Villa Pancha, a white lotus blossom will soon appear in Santiago de los Caballeros. □



The lowest level of this section of Doña Maria's garden is planted with frothy pale begonias and lacy ferns. The higher plants have larger leaves and glossier textures: anthurium, tree ferns, and bananas.


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JOURNAL

A RICH HARVEST OF BOTANICAL BOUNTY





Flowers of Three Centuries.
The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, Nov. 17–Jan. 8; Beaumont Art Museum, Beaumont, Texas, Jan. 20–Feb. 26; Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Mar. 20–May 6.

Botanical Watercolors and related European Ceramics.
Armin B. Allen Gallery, New York, through Oct. 22.

Flowers have been a popular subject for artists throughout the centuries: some painted purely for pleasure, others commissioned to record prized flowers from aristocratic gardens. One hundred of these drawings are now on tour in *Flowers of Three Centuries,* selected from the collection left by Henry Broughton to Cambridge University's Fitzwilliam Museum. Artists include Redouté and Henrietta Geertruida Knip, who rendered the *Selenicereus Grandiflorus* or Queen-of-the-Night, *far left.* A rare Sèvres plate, 1821, *left,* is part of the charming exhibit at the Armin B. Allen Gallery.

Gabrielle Winkel

"In furnishings we need to establish a democratic base of okayness. If you have fifty dollars and are naked, you can buy sneakers, jeans, a T-shirt and a sweatshirt, and be as good as anybody. In furnishings, you really can't."

—JACK LENOR LARSEN
in Handmade in America: Conversations with Fourteen Craftmasters, *by Barbaralee Diamonstein (Abrams, $49.50).*

DRAFTSMAN'S CONTACT

Gainsborough Drawings.
The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
Oct. 2–Dec. 4, 1983.

This exhibition bears out that Gainsborough's fame as a painter need no longer eclipse his skill as a draftsman. Too bad that fashionable sitters kept him from the woods and water-meadows which inspired his spirited drawings of gnarled boughs and feathery foliage—the quintessence of the Picturesque. Way ahead of his time is the spontaneous way these drawings pin down nature's transient effects. Gainsborough would apply washes of color with sponges, and attack the black chalk with his fingers. Action drawing!

John Richardson



THE STARS SAY "CHEESE"

Carmen Miranda serving canapés from her head more familiarly bedecked with fruit) is but one of 65 bizarre publicity stills from the great days of the Hollywood studios in *Still Life* (Callaway Editions, $39.95), edited by Diane Keaton and Marvin Heiferman, and designed by Lloyd Ziff. Some are art, some are camp, all are intriguing. *M.F.*





THE HUMAN CHARM OF THE AMSTERDAM SCHOOL

The Amsterdam School: Dutch Expressionist Architecture, 1915–1930. *Cooper-Hewitt Museum, New York, Nov. 1–Feb. 5, 1984.*

The very words "public housing" induce a grim loathing in most Americans, and with good reason, for social-welfare architecture in this country often seems more like a punishment for poverty than a remedy for substandard living conditions. The humane and enlightened Dutch, however, devised some of the most enduringly pleasing public housing of our century, which forms the basis of this excellent exhibition (organized by guest curator Wim J.M. de Wit) on one of the least-known and yet most admirable chapters in modern architecture.

The dominance of the sleek and shiny International Style has for years deflected attention from the Amsterdam School, which flourished in the years after World War I. Leader of the group was Michel de Klerk (1884–1923), whose combination of homey materials and intimate scale drew on Dutch domestic design, but whose love of vigorous ornament and bold forms was closely related to the work of his contemporaries among the German Expressionists.

De Klerk had at his fingertips what many architects since his tragic early death have only groped for: the ability to create new places in which people can feel instinctively at home. His housing estates in Amsterdam, especially the *Eigen Haard* ("Own Hearth") development of 1913–19, *above left*, are picturesque and traditional in essence but daring in their departures from convention. Above all, they are perfectly delightful places to live in. Now that Modern architecture is no longer seen as a menacing monolith, worthy attention can again be focused on one of its happiest (if briefest) moments.

Martin Filler

BRINGING AN AMERICAN CLASSIC BACK TO LIFE

Of Mice and Men. The New York City Opera, New York State Theater, Oct. 13, 19, 27.

The story of Lennie and George has already been well-dramatized on stage and screen. Now their tragedy takes on a musical score in an opera written by Carlisle Floyd. The opera's classic elements closely align with the text and incorporate the feel of John Steinbeck's powerful novel. The twenties costumes designed and executed by Charles R. Caine evoke a ranch-hand look through exaggerated textures and scale. The production, which premiered with the Greater Miami Opera in June 1982, is directed by Frank Corsaro. The cast includes Robert Moulson as Lennie and Lawrence Cooper as George. Settings by Robert O'Hearn. *G.W.*



Costume design for Curley

(Continued from page 150) situation in which comparison between works is facilitated by meaningful juxtaposition, enhancing one's appreciation of each element within the comparison. For this to happen the architecture has to have a spatial dynamic, offer punctuation points, mark the end of a vista, for example. Meier extends that argument, making the relationship between the environment and the work of art more active."

Meier's desire to create a carefully structured interior for the museum—and the High board's determination to go with his approach over the more than 75 architectural firms considered—is but the first indication of a reconsideration of some standard tenets of museology. Perhaps even more unconventional than the architecture was the creation of collections for the new museum that do not attempt to be definitive statements of a period in art history. The two groups of works amassed over the past few years, with an eye toward enlarged exhibition opportunities, are centered on the idea of specialization. One aspect of the High's particular situation is, of course, the character of its location.

"The South still has a strong regional flavor, compared to the rest of the country," Peter Morrin asserts. "Not just visually, either. That food traditions still exist is just the most superficial indication of a regional sensibility. Sunbelt culture—skyscrapers in Atlanta—is about an inch deep."

These thoughts are part of the reason behind the Lucinda Bunnen Photography Collection. Though the museum had been acquiring photographs since 1974, in the beginning it aspired, in typical fashion, to an encyclopedic body of images. Things changed when, as Morrin explains, "We were fortunate to have a donor who was a talented photographer herself, a photo collector, and a member of the board. Her concept was a collection oriented to our part of the world, Southern photography. And we defined that sensibility as one that saw the camera not as a tool of documentation but as a means of revealing the personality, a subjective view. In the South, storytelling traditions are very strong, and photography in the hands of a skilled practitioner lends itself to implied narration. When you think about the great young narrative artists today, you're thinking about Southern artists—writers and visual artists. Also it is important to realize that folk traditions are very much alive here. There is a natural inclination in the South to a surrealist view of the world."

These notions—subjective content, narrative concerns, surrealist sensibility—guided the High's staff to a distinct group of photographers. Of the more than 35 artists represented in the Bunnen Collection, it seems most appropriate that the first 26 pictures purchased should be by Clarence John



The High's dynamic exterior hints at interiors charged for art.

Laughlin, the dean of the Southern school of photography. Laughlin's combination of words and images and his emphasis on the personal view predicted the concerns of many contemporary photographers. After the Laughlin purchase, an effort was begun to find works that fit Bunnen and the staff's philosophy but were not well-known images, as curator Morrin says, "not used up by the media." Thus the new museum houses surprising examples of the work of such familiar artists as Duane Michals, William Eggleston, Emmet Gowin, Chuck Close, and Cindy Sherman. But there is also room in the High's collecting plans for photographers who have not yet established national reputations. An artist such as Evon Streetman, whose name is not immediately recognizable but whose photographs are powerfully expressive and mature statements, is just one of the attractions of this more focused approach to collecting.

The decorative-arts department of the museum has also carved out a unique profile, and fortunately it has found a benefactor willing to make this vision a reality. Five years ago, Virginia Carroll Crawford agreed to underwrite the acquisition of a body of American decorative objects produced between 1830 and World War I. Lest this seem a straightforward though generous philanthropic act, curator Donald Peirce explains that it was, in fact, an unorthodox event: "The cut-off date for collecting Americana has traditionally been 1830 or 1840. Witness Winterthur, for example. For a collection to be conceived with the rest of the nineteenth century in mind is unheard of—and normally it would have been difficult to get a donor's support."

In the spring of 1979, David A. Hanks, a consulting curator, was hired to scout the marketplace for items that fit the period and criteria established by the museum. The High staff had decided that visual impact—quality of design and workmanship—was its principal concern, but also of interest was documentation, pieces that could be incontestably linked to an important maker or owner. The result of the time spent scouring the market are 135 objects, and the quality of the items seems uniformly high. Some, like the Belter parlor set or a Roux étagère, are spectacular. Curator Peirce is probably correct when he asserts that the High's decorative-arts galleries will change the way American furniture and objets d'art of the last century are regarded. "For many people Victoriana has a very bad connotation, but now they will see that the standards of workmanship and design could be every bit as fine as pre-1850 pieces."

It is good news for the American art scene that the opening of Atlanta's new museum is not just business as usual. Paradoxically, by not being afraid to confront the limitations and opportunities presented by its history, budget, and region, the High Museum has avoided provincialism and set an example for the entire country. □

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(*Continued from page 114*) bearing is one of hesitant submission rather than pleasurable anticipation or surrender as in earlier paintings of this subject by Titian or Correggio. This characterization is further developed in the second version in Cleveland where Danaë's expression has become decidedly more anxious, and Ward Bissell, the leading scholar on Gentileschi, has described the artist's treatment of the subject as "de-eroticized" with telling implications as to Gentileschi's sensibility.

Directly across the sitting room from the *Danaë,* over the mantelpiece, is one of the two Turners in the collection, *Ancient Italy: Ovid Banished from Rome.* The companion to the Feigen painting, *Modern Italy—The Pifferari,* is in the Glasgow Art Gallery. There is some speculation as to Turner's meaning in these works, which were first exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1838. The "narrative" of *Ancient Italy,* with diminutive figures insignificant in relation to the setting of ancient Rome, is relegated to the lower left foreground, where Ovid is cast out ostensibly because his love poetry, particularly his *Ars amatoria, The Art of Love,* was considered offensive to public morals, but more likely for some intrigue, domestic or political, in which he was involved with the Emperor Augustus's daughter, Julia. Rome is shown in all its imagined glory in the Feigen picture.

Between two doors on the other wall is Max Beckmann's *The Barge,* painted in 1926 while he was teaching in Frankfurt and enjoying enthusiastic critical reception and patronage. The tall, narrow canvas shows a group of men and women on a barge—a swimming party—one rowing, others swimming or sunbathing. The man in the foreground, climbing out of the water, makes advances to his companion, whose bathing-suit strap has slipped off her shoulders, and a woman seated farther along on the barge pulls her shirt off to reveal her heavy breasts. The young man, the only one fully dressed, strikes an incongruous note in this otherwise robust, even coarse company. But things might not be exactly as they seem. According to Stephen Lackner, there seem to be references in this painting to Hieronymus Bosch's *Ship of Fools* as well as to the sinister political forces gathering in Europe at this time. These are the three major paintings in the living room but there are also several smaller works.

There are two Boningtons: an interior, *Henri IV's Bed Chamber at the Chateau de Roche-Guyon,* a little stage-set-like portrait of a room, all in shadow except for the light that fills the window and spills onto the floor; and a softly lighted but crystalline *View of Lerici,* with the Gulf of Spezia from which Shelley sailed in 1822 to drown at sea a month short of his thirtieth year. Bonington himself was a consumptive and died at age 26, two years after he painted this scene during his Italian journey in 1826. Bonington's *oeuvre* is therefore quite small and his works highly prized.

There are also two small paintings by Girodet, one of the most brilliant pupils and assistants of Jacques-Louis David: an authoritative oil sketch, actually only attributed to Girodet, but very surely on the basis of a closely related drawing surely by his hand, and a small, highly finished version of Girodet's famous, almost unbearably erotic *Le Sommeil d'Endymion,* in the Louvre.

Two other small paintings hang between the windows in this room: Puvis de Chavannes's *Euterpe,* a sketch with a dedication to a friend, and an interior by the nineteenth-century American painter William Rimmer, rather cloying but admirable in its perfection of finish and state.

While as an art dealer Feigen enjoys certain advantages and opportunities, one is still amazed to find yet another Gentileschi in the hallway. It seems, at last count, that there are fourteen paintings by Orazio Gentileschi in private hands, only two in the Western Hemisphere and both in this collection.

The *Penitent Magdalen* is again a very large picture and shows the saint reclining in a barren, rocky landscape with an ivy-framed view to the horizon. Her head is thrown back looking heavenward, her left arm resting on her prayer book nestling a skull, the attributes of her piety and renunciation. There are at least four autograph versions of this general composition, and Ward Bissell believes that the *Magdalen* may have been painted in Paris or possibly sent to Marie de Médicis in Paris from Northern Italy and may have led to (*Continued on page 220*)



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ART FROM FIVE CENTURIES

(Continued from page 219) Gentileschi's invitation to France.

The library has nothing but Beckmanns on the wall. The most important one in the room is *Bird's Hell,* a large painting that is an allegory of Nazi Germany. The Prussian eagle, adopted as a symbol by the Third Reich, occupies a conspicuous position in the composition, and the brightly plumed birds represent, according to Stephen Lackner, rich party officials who were referred to as *Goldfasanen* (gold pheasants) because of their splendid and well-tailored uniforms. Circular forms in the background are the ever-present loudspeakers that numbed the German populace with their constant propaganda. To the right of the Prussian, or Nazi, eagle stands the most horrific and puzzling creature in this chamber of horrors, a many-breasted blue hag with savage teeth and green hair who bursts from an outsize egg, her right arm raised in the *Hitlergrüsse,* or Nazi salute. She is Germania, Mother Earth, an important element in the *Blut and Boden* (blood-and-soil) philosophy of the Nazis. A docile but grim crowd of maidens, pure white, stand behind her ready to serve and propagate the Aryan race with the file of shouting green men, warriors, to the left, their arms raised in the too-familiar salute. The symbolic victim in this tableau, the enemy of the Reich, is a naked, ascetic-looking man with great hollowed eyes, shackled and stretched out on a wooden bench while one of the Goldfasanen carves him up with a knife. The newspaper lying on the floor would belong to this man and the table in the foreground holds elements incongruous to this nightmarish scene: grapes, an illustrated book, and the candle of intellectual endeavor—references no doubt to a way of life before the Nazis and perhaps some hope, in the lighted candle, of a return to sanity. Beckmann had already fled Germany in 1937 and the painting was done in 1938 in Amsterdam. The colors are strident, the brushwork aggressive, and the images grotesque, but if one doesn't look too carefully and has not read Stephen Lackner's excellent analysis of the picture, it is curious how this painting seems part of a pleasing decorative effect that the other less disturbing Beckmanns in the room create.

Placed atop a long console beneath *Bird's Hell* is a group of Joseph Cornell boxes. The plain wooden box of the 1939 *A Dressing Room for Gilles* hardly prepares you for the little dark chamber where the figure of Gilles is suspended, cut out from a reproduction of a painting by Watteau. The figure has been divided into sections linked with cloth tape so that it floats like a listless, ghostly marionette. The sides and back of the interior are covered with a diamond harlequin-patterned paper, intricately worked with mirrors to compound the mystery of this little chamber. The bottom of the box is covered with sand in which a pink object sits tied with a beige ribbon. There is reason to believe that the character of Gilles was one with which Watteau identified—the forlorn, misunderstood odd man out—and Cornell has reinvented, perhaps for himself, something of the haunting, hermetic, and fragile melancholy of that most poignant of eighteenth-century masters. One of the most beautiful Cornell boxes is *L'Egypte de Mlle Cléo de Mérode, Cours Élémentaire d'Histoire Naturelle* of 1940. As art historian Sandra Starr puts it, this casketlike box, with its references to Egyptian burial, is full of seemingly endless multilevel references, evoking the romantic, the historical, and the mystical—an everlasting metaphysical dialogue. Hints of Cleopatra, Cléo de Merode, Leopold II, *The Thousand and One Nights,* the Belle Époque, and the ballet are sealed in twelve corked bottles in "this dressing case for eternity full of biographical details telescoped in a time-frame box." A great Belle Époque beauty and courtesan/ballerina, Cléo de Mérode, photographed by Nadar, painted by Boldini, was famous for her liaison with Leopold II of Belgium, who sent an expedition to Egypt during the time he was with her. There is a certain pleasure in lifting each bottle out of its bed of red sand to read the witty note and look at the contents, whether pearls or a bit of tutu.

The earlier of the two Turners in the collection hangs in the dining room. As in the case of the Gentileschis, it is astounding to find two such important works by Turner in a private collection. *The Temple of Jupiter Panellius Restored* was *(Continued on page 222)*

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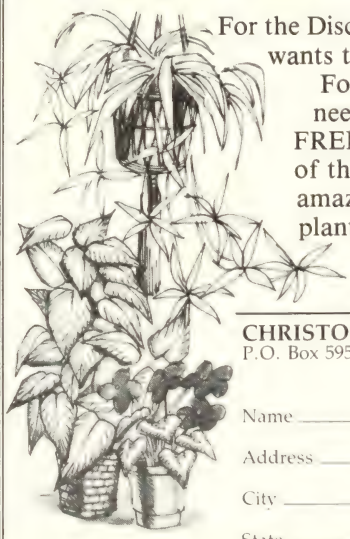


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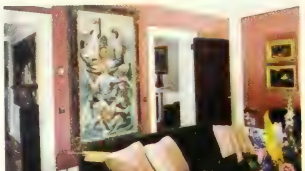
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(Continued from page 221) exhibited in 1816 along with a companion piece, which is in the collection of the Duke of Northumberland. The whereabouts of the Feigen picture was unknown since its sale at auction in 1876 until its reappearance, again at auction, at Christie's in 1982. The picture is a masterpiece, although very different in its classicizing construction and spirit from *Ancient Italy.* In this composition Turner acknowledges not only his debt to Claude Lorrain, but also his careful study of Poussin. Turner never went to Greece and was not to make his first journey to Italy until 1819. The quality of light is that of the Roman Campagna derived from Claude, just as the architecture of the Temple of Jupiter Panellius is dependent on a sketch provided to Turner by one Henry Galley Knight, an amateur artist.

Also in this room is *An Adoration of the Christ Child* of about 1505, by the Sienese artist Il Sodoma. It is a rather arch work, and the precise drawing and coloration give the effect of polychrome marble. No less artificial than the Sodoma but of a very different sort, by a northern artist and of the late sixteenth century, is a *Perseus and Andromeda* by Carel van Mander, the so-called Vasari of the North because of his writings on the lives of famous artists. Feigen has a great enthusiasm for Northern Mannerists, quite rare among private collectors, especially in this country.

You simply don't know where to begin to look when you enter the master bedroom. Because of my own weakness for Northern Mannerist painting, I immediately went to the splendid Joachim Uyttewael *Adoration of the Shepherds* over the mantelpiece. It is certainly not to everyone's taste, a rather overwrought work crowded with large figures in convoluted poses, often with distorted hands and feet (the foot of one shepherd is simply an anatomical impossibility) and discordant colors worked to a rather high finish, but it is a compelling and authoritative work and, placed as it is opposite the bed, I thought how satisfying and exhilarating it must be to wake to such a work of art every day. I must admit, although with still great respect, that I thought it just as well that the group of Dubuffets—*Femme Pétrie d'Argile,* a classic of 1946, in the center, with drawings by the master to either side—were placed on the wall behind the bed.



Max Beckmann's *The Barge,* 1926, in the living room. *Below:* In the master bedroom, Pieter van Laer's *Self Portrait,* ca. 1620, faces the bed. Bedcover from Ad Hoc Softwares.

From this essentially monochromatic wall the eye is caught by a brilliant little oil by Max Ernst, *Nain Jaune* of 1935, related to the artist's frottages, and painted in acid red, yellow, and green. Between the windows of the same wall are two small Italian religious pictures of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, very much private devotional pictures, intimate works by two great and highly idiosyncratic artists: a lunette with a *Pietà* by Lorenzo Lotto and *Christ Appearing to the Magdalen* by Giovanni Lanfranco.

Above the bookcase where mor Cornells sit, and to the left of the fir place, is a very handsome early-sever teenth-century painting of Venu presiding over the taming of a wil boar by two Amors, the power of lov taming the savage beast. I can only tak the attribution of Everett Fahy to Ale sandro Turchi, supposedly an ear work of around 1600, on faith.

In the midst of all this there is yet a other surprise, a bizarre painting of a alchemist by the seventeenth-centu painter Pieter van Laer, nicknamed Bamboccio (because of his deforme body). Surrounded by unsavory par phernalia such as a skull placed ov burning coals that seems to serve as cooking vessel, the conjurer is terrific by what must be the success of one his domestic experiments as two clay emerge from the darkness to the righ The painting is signed—which is ve rare for this artist—on the sheet of m sic being singed by a burning candl perhaps a *vanitas* symbol. The pictu is, however, not without humor a perhaps self-mocking, as it has be suggested that this is a self-portra The Haarlem artist was the leader the painters of low genre subjects po ular with the Roman aristocracy of t time. These *bambocciata* paintings, they were called, depicted realist scenes of Roman street and peasant li that were directly influenced by Carr vaggio.

If not the most important, one of th most precious and appealing works the collection, in Richard Feiger daughter Philippa's room, is a dimin tive painting on metal: St. Peter kne ing in a landscape, the telltale cock o tree stump behind him. There is a te tative but unsatisfactory attribution Denys Calvaert, a Northern Manner who spent most of his active life in B logna. The painting is in almost perfe condition, superb, and deserves name. And as we poured over it f some clue as to its authorship I cou see how much Richard wanted to p this one down. But no matter, the qu ity was there as it is throughout th amazing collection. □

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(Continued from page 186) moved in, the large two-story hall, with its swags of stucco decoration, was dark green. I had seen a pink room I wanted to copy. The paint went on in eight very thin coats of distemper (a paint not mixed with oil but with size or white of egg) so that when the work was finished the color looked like part of the stucco. Executed in a thick oil-based paint, that pink would have looked terrible—like strawberry ice cream.

From the drawing room you could see through a window onto a lake and beyond to some of the biggest grass fields in England. On the other side of the pink hall was a sloping hillside, a line of elm trees, and cattle. Standing in the center of the hall you could get both views. "After hunting we had fires in the fireplaces and we would have tea in there. The great horse painter Alfred Munnings was often our houseguest in those days. He wanted to paint the pink hall with the pink coats of the members of the hunt, the hunt servants in a deeper red, and great baskets of geraniums. That hall pink went around the countryside like measles. What most people didn't understand was that to pull it off you also needed fires, candlelight, and flowers."

In 1933, when Ronald Tree's term as master was coming to an end and he was elected to Parliament, the Trees bought Ditchley, a large Palladian stone house in Oxfordshire. It was built according to one of the favorite designs of fashionable eighteenth-century Palladian architects in England—an imposing center block with a pair of balancing wings placed slightly forward on each side and connected to the main block by curving corridors. (Now used as a center for conferences on Anglo-American topics, it can be seen the last two weeks of July every year.) James Gibbs was principally an architect of churches. He built a few houses and Ditchley is the most important he ever did. It sits not far from palaces like Blenheim and Heythrop and represents the sober, strict classicism in fashion in the 1720s, a contrast to the massive baroque style of the other two. The Trees bought not only the house but virtually all of its contents—which meant that they had, among other things, furniture and paintings (portraits of the family had been sold) done by William Kent especially for the house. Kent's elaborate gilding earned for him the adjective "coarse" from Mrs. Tree, who also dislikes the regilding of Kent furniture by modern restorers—"about as attractive as a mouth full of gold teeth." The *Country Life* photographs of the house taken just before the Trees bought it show a hall that was imposing, masculine, and almost institutional. A. Serebriakoff's watercolors of the house done years later document the vitality and elegance Nancy Tree gave the place. "We had bought it lock, stock, and barrel—it was a very grand house with a personality of its own, but not an awesome place like Blenheim. In my sitting room there were overdoors by Pannini.



The living room at Haseley

There were Chippendale gilt decorations in the drawing room. Kent did the paintings as well as some of the furniture. The stuccowork was done by two famous Italians, Giuseppe Artaria and Francesco Vasalli. When you've got something that's been done by the best people of an era you can't put Mr. Jones's ideas into it; you're tied down."

"The hall Gibbs designed at Ditchley was a superb room because of the proportions and the furniture Kent designed for it," Michael Tree remembers. "My mother added sofas, chairs, a French writing desk, a rug, and there was always a fire. There were some very grand rooms all the way around the ground floor hung in silk and Chinese Chippendale motifs. There was a room made of Genoese velvet, which had been especially done for the house when it was built. My mother's way of making Ditchley livable was to create a sense of ease. She was opposed to dressing things up beyond all recognition. Although Ditchley required silk and velvet—and she put them all over the place—she liked the sun to get to these materials. She liked them to go shabby and live a life of their own. What she liked most about Ditchley was the atmosphere of continuity it gave off. The house had always belonged to the Lees. Sir Henry Lee had been Queen Elizabeth's champion for over thirty years and was one of the Lees who eventually went to Virginia and produced Robert E. Lee. My mother loved that connection. I was twelve when we first went to Ditchley. It was unbelievably comfortable, luxurious, and beautiful. But I suppose Ditchley was not what my mother really liked. She loved the thought of a farm and life coming right up to the front door. Ditchley in its grand eighteenth-century way, with its vast deer park, must have seemed rather cold."

It was after she left Ditchley that Mrs. Tree bought Colefax, changing the name to Colefax and Fowler since John Fowler was to continue to manage the firm. "We often went into the country to buy things and used to come back with fourposter beds on top of the car. We argued the whole way about rooms we were doing. I'd say to him, you're the charming Mrs. Tree with the ruffles and I'm the sense of scale," she remembers. Many people have commented on what emerged from their partnership. Stanley Falconer, who has been with Colefax and Fowler since the sixties, says it this way: "John Fowler's taste had a slightly feminine, frilly quality to it and Mrs Tree made it human. The secret of her decorating was that it always looked as though there were a man in the house; her rooms looked lived in. I remember John Fowler giving me a two-hour lesson on how to puff up cushions—shake one side, shake the other, then settle it so it didn't look like it was blown up by a bicycle pump. Mrs. Tree's *(Continued on page 226)*

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(Continued from page 224) attitude toward the cushions, even though she wanted that hidden extravagance of having them filled with down, was to have the dogs sit on them," he remarks.

The Trees divorced after the war. Mrs. Tree became Mrs. Lancaster, and though that marriage lasted briefly the name has stuck. Ronald Tree later remarried, and Ditchley was sold.

In the fifties Nancy Lancaster worked closely with John Fowler, and when she bought another house in Oxfordshire what he helped her create there seemed close to perfect. Haseley Court is a far simpler house than Ditchley. A Georgian front was added to the existing manor house in 1700. Fundamentally a squire's house, it had good bones but no musts. "The house was so derelict that by the time I finished I felt I'd just bought Versailles," she says. However, the dereliction of the interiors offered Mrs. Lancaster a freedom to do as she pleased. Bringing from Ditchley some William Kent bookcases and banquettes, two Elizabethan portraits and a number of gilt chinoiserie wall decorations, Mrs. Lancaster had some very good things to build the decoration around. She furnished Haseley eclectically with things taken from several periods and countries, putting one thing with another for no reason other than that they looked well together. It has been said that John Fowler understood the application of paint as few others did. With his help and the help of an artist called George Oakes, who had just joined the firm, she pulled off some rooms of incredible handsomeness at Haseley. At Ditchley there had been a hall originally painted an unsentimental but good-looking orange. As reapplied in her bedroom at Haseley, an enormous Gothick room, the paint looked as if it were frescoed onto the walls. It was chalky, deliberately uneven, and strongly architectural. The base, lighter than the rest, grinned through the final coat. A monumental bed with a top like a cupola and hung with blue fringed ivory silk, together with a pair of screens of seventeenth-century Spanish leather, set the scale of the room. For the card room, George Oakes copied a chinoiserie wallpaper from the royal theater at Drottningholm using a swatch given to Mrs. Lancaster by the King of Sweden. George Oakes remembers that in the original version each leaf was covered with white of egg—leaving the leaves shiny and everything else matte. Though it took money to achieve the atmosphere at Haseley, mere money could never have created it. The shabbiness was just right, never dirty, just pleasantly worn. Mrs. Lancaster loved black lacquer but hers was usually Queen Anne and never shiny. She and John Fowler deliberately sought out starved lacquer and mahogany furniture and never restored it to look like new.

About ten years ago there was a fire at Haseley, after which the big house was sold and Mrs. Lancaster went to live at the bottom of the garden in a cottage she calls Coach House because it was originally a shed for carts. In it she put simple painted furniture and sent the Elizabethan portraits to London, where at 22 Avery Row they made the large barrel-vaulted sitting room into one of the most stylish of its era. The room gets little direct sunlight—a good excuse to paint it a deep, rich lacquer yellow. Banquettes from Ditchley taken to Haseley ended up in this drawing room, originally a studio built by Jeffrey Wyatt over his stable. Across a flagstone-paved garden shaded by an enormous catalpa tree is Wyatt's house, which Colefax and Fowler use for offices. (Today Michael Tree is the principal owner of the firm, along with Tom Parr.) Until recently the big yellow room housed Mrs. Lancaster's London life when she came up two nights a week. In it were more things than most people have in a whole house—46 pairs of chairs, pictures, objects—but no disorder. It is here that the Elizabethan portraits came most vividly into their own.

"I love Elizabethan pictures for their simplicity. These two had been sold from Ditchley before we bought the house, but I was able to buy them later at a sale. I told John Fowler that they looked like Goyas and I was going to put a bid on them. He was incredulous when I got them. They are two sisters, both dressed alike. One was moral and married a Lord Something-or-other and lived in Warwickshire. Everybody liked her and she was very popular. Her sister Mary Fitton was very bad, very dashing, and lady-in-waiting to Queen Elizabeth. She'd dress up like a man after she'd put the queen to bed and go all over London with Shakespeare and Lord Pembroke. The queen was about to send her to the Tower because she was having a baby by Lord Pembroke, but her father got her off. They say she's the dark lady of Shakespeare's sonnets."

Last fall, full of plans to travel, to see houses and people and quite content to live in the country with her garden, Mrs. Lancaster sold the contents of her London flat. Oddly perhaps, Mrs. Lancaster seemed gay in spite of the process, not because less ever meant more to her really, but somehow having less opened new vistas. A large fabric firm wants her advice. She wants to go looking at more houses in Ireland and North Carolina. There will be a book.

As though it were one of the most vivid moments of her life she speaks of an Irish house she happened across in a recent exploration. Uninvited, she climbed a ladder one day and looked into a window. The room was the color of a Chinese persimmon—the perfect halfway between red and yellow. The curtains were the color of faded ink blue denim. She didn't remember the paintings because the frames, in white and gilt, seemed so beautiful. Seen from the ladder the room seemed radiant, unexpected.

"The odd thing was, when I was invited for lunch and taken to see the room afterward, I had quite a different impression. It was not as nice as the view from the ladder, when my imagination went wild. Things must be underdone so that the imagination can still work. A house needs things that are warm and ugly. It gives value to the good things."

Which is why a lot of her friends feel they have to wash new chintzes in tea. For herself, Mrs. Lancaster would do nothing so contrived. Rather she waits cheerfully for the opportunity to jostle the arm of an unsuspecting tea guest, content with a few new splashes on her slipcovers. □

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NATURE'S SLEEPING BEAUTIES

When you're considering what to plant for spring, don't overlook the bulbs that bloom in summer, autumn, and winter

By Anthony Huxley

The catalogues I look forward to most each year are undoubtedly those from bulb merchants. When my orders arrive I delight in handling the curious objects in the packs. Here may be plump, tapered bulbs of tulips and daffodils encased in brownish, papery scales; hyacinth bulb globes, purple or white-scaled according to flower color; little flattish crocus corms in fibrous coats, probably already with white points of growth; squat flat cyclamen tubers with maybe just a few old roots to show you which way up to plant; blackish shapeless morsels of winter aconite or anemone, tubers with no indication (nor worry) of top and bottom. There may be tiny ranunculus tubers with radiating "fingers," probably needing soaking before planting; woolly topknots of *Oxalis adenophylla* tubers; enormous fox-smelling bulbs of crown imperial (*Fritillaria imperialis*), consisting of a few almost disjointed segments with a central hollow.



Tulips backed by foxglove at Longwood Gardens

These few mentions will remind that to most nurserymen and gardeners the word "bulb" embraces several technically distinct kinds of fleshy root which have in common the capacity of being stored and sold dry—nature's prepacks. Bulbs are constructed of fleshy scales, usually integrated with a smooth exterior, sometimes separated as in lilies. The others, if dissected, are of solid flesh. The corm uniquely replaces itself each season, a new plump corm growing beneath the original; the rhizome is a fleshy, usually horizontal root as in the bearded iris; while "tuber" covers a multitude of miscellaneous fleshy stores, some producing growth directly from their surface, like cyclamens and begonias, others clustering round a central crown from which stems grow, as in dahlias and cartwheel-rooted foxtail lily (*Eremurus*).

All are solutions to the problems faced by plants which undergo a dry season and must rest at that time. Their flesh retains water and starchy foodstuffs that give flowers and leaves a start when rain once more reaches their niches in the soil; sometimes they stay dormant for more than one season. Many come from semi-deserts or countries with long hot summers; others are woodlanders, opportunists that flower early in the season before the trees' leaf canopy and new root activity curtail light and soil moisture.

Most bulbs (I now use the word generically) are endowed with remarkable vitality. We all know the autumn crocuses or colchicums, sometimes called naked ladies (or naked boys, according to taste) because their long pale flower tubes bearing their showy goblet flowers emerge from the ground without benefit of leaves. These large corms, with a foot-like projection on one side (which anciently gave them the reputation of curing gout) will sprout their numerous flowers in a dry state. So does that jack-in-the-pulpit relation *Sauromatum,* exaggeratedly called Monarch of the East: its erect, sinister purple and yellow spathe, malodorous when mature, grows without benefit of soil, though the many-fingered leaves that follow potting always seem to me better value. And that huge green bulb which protrudes through the soil in the Mediterranean, the sea squill (*Urginea maritima*), producing its thin white flower spikes in late summer, is used as a fertility symbol in Greece for, hung up in the house at New Year, it sprouts leaves over many seasons.

To anyone interested in plant adaptability to difficult conditions these bulbs and *(Continued on page 230)*

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One might say that the only real trouble with bulbs is finding space for them

(Continued from page 228) their ilk are fascinating in themselves. Most gardeners, I suspect, do not think in those terms but just find them exceedingly convenient—dig a hole, pop in the bulb, cover—and flowers are virtually guaranteed. Needless to say, more trouble taken will usually improve flower quality and the bulb's useful life. One might say that the only real trouble with bulbs, having ordered what seem reasonable quantities, is finding space for them. A garden should surely be able to absorb, say, fifty crocuses, but when they arrive it does not always seem so! Not less worrying is their disappearance in their resting season—it is agonizing to bisect a choice lily bulb, perhaps, when troweling a hole for another plant in what seemed to be a bare patch. Some kind of marker is very advisable for the choicer kinds at least.

Bulbs have particularly beautiful, sometimes strange flowers, and this is partly at least because they mostly belong to the botanical class called monocotyledons in which the flower segments are not separated, as in a rose, into colorful petals and green or brown external sepals, but each of the segments (normally six) contributes to the display. Botanists sometimes refer to these flowers as "petaloid monocots." The most familiar are the lily, amaryllis or daffodil, and iris families, but under this fleshy-rooted umbrella are also gingers, cannas, many terrestrial orchids, and some of the arum family.

Though most people prize and admire these plants, I once worked with a Kew botanist who despised the meretricious charms of these "petaloid monocots"—words he would utter in a tone of positive outrage. Better to him a grass or a moss any day! Well, as they say, it takes all kinds.... My friend would presumably appreciate better the non-monocotyledons with fleshy roots, which include tuberous begonias, gloxinias and their kin, cyclamen (which belong to the primrose family), anemone, ranunculus and winter aconite (buttercup relations), blood root (poppy family), dahlia (daisy family), and so on. Curiously enough many of these are petaloid, or without very no ticeable sepals, so that they often par take of the same distinctive flowe quality as the monocots.





Top: A cluster of snow drops, *Galanthus nivalis. Above:* Hybrid tuberous begonias—first introduced in 1870—fill a window box.

These bulb flowers certainly have a quality all of their own: they dominate in particular my most exciting recollections of wild plant finds—lilies, irises tulips, in desert or on mountains—but that is another tale. In the garden the cold-climate bulbs give some of the earliest and brightest color of the year; indeed the crocus tribe starts in autumn and continues all through winter, their upright cups often delicately feathered in a second color. These winter bulbs have a special sheen—winter aconites like little green-ruffed suns, virginal pendant snowdrops, starry scillas, *Muscari* clustered with tiny bells, frail-seeming dwarf irises—and all open whatever the weather, the brilliant blue *Chionodoxa* being indeed called glory of the snow. The erythroniums, hyacinths, narcissi, tulips, and irises lead on to the great crown imperials, red or *(Continued on page 232)*

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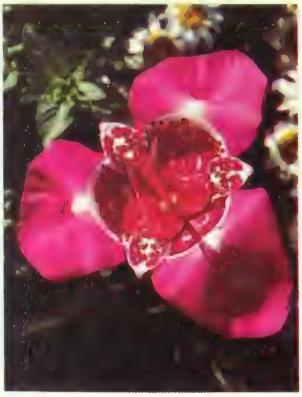
Above: Double grape hyacinth, or *Muscari armeniacum* 'Blue Spike'. *Below right: Tigridia,* native to Mexico and Peru, is a summer bulb that takes well to pot culture.

Above: Winter-flowering *Crocus chrysanthus* 'E.A. Bowles'. *Left:* The canna, that favorite summer bedding plant of the Victorians and planters of public parks.

(Continued from page 230) yellow, with six teardrops of nectar hanging in their bells apparently defying the force of gravity; to the fascinating onion tribe, which reaches from a few inches to four feet in *Allium giganteum;* to *Camassia, Galtonia,* gladioli, stately crinum whose bulbs can extend three feet down, and, of course, lilies.

Lilies are kings, or certainly queens of the summer garden, from two to eight feet tall, usually with noble clusters of flowers, trumpet or turkscap, in endless colors thanks to breeders worldwide, and many are deliciously fragrant. Having rather unsuitable, slug-ridden soil I prefer to grow them in large pots or tubs on the garden terrace, with the added advantage that they can be moved where wanted, even into border gaps or into conservatory or dwelling. How well they suit hot, languorous days.

Containers in fact suit most kinds of bulbs. If you cannot afford to grow tulips, say, in large swathes, wide containers holding eight or ten give a focal point of brilliance. Pots are good too for the summer bulbs, so many of which need extra good drainage—ixias, harlequin flower (*Sparaxis*), heaven-scented freesias, many-hued ranunculus with myriad silken petals, butterfly-like *Acidanthera,* or resplendent, improbable Mexican shellflower (*Tigridia*). Many of these need to be stored frost-free in cold areas, or can simply be treated as expendable; in warm climates they can of course be left in the ground.



I have not touched on indoor or greenhouse bulbs, like the amaryllis or *Hippeastrum,* which can carry four or more huge, brilliant trumpets in winter; *Veltheimia* with pink "pokers" above viridian, wavy foliage, again in winter; stately crimson *Sprekelia* or Jacobean lily, long known to fanciers, more like an orchid with its irregular flowers; and the *Haemanthus* like *H. Katherinae,* the fireball lily, its spidery scarlet gloves set off with pale green foliage. And there are many more.

It has to be said that some of these are ugly in leaf—none more than amaryllis—and they also need summer routine of sun, high-potash feeds, and final dry rest; are they worth their week or two of exotic bloom? Personally I find these, with their large chunky bulbs, almost irresistible, and make summer space for them somehow. The excitement when a bulb emerges, the weeks of waiting for bloom, the splendid opening, are worth all the trouble.

No garden need be without bulbs; no garden *should* be. If it's a small yard, grow them in containers as I've suggested. Borders can be seasonally enlivened with bulb flowers; *Galtonia,* alliums, and the more airy gladioli are specially suitable, while lilies are good in shrub borders where they are unlikely to be disturbed. An old orchard filled with daffodils is a joy; a meadow patch can be planted with a variety of bulbs strong enough to compete with the grass.

With their long periods underground, each bulb's emergence into flower is a resurrection of life, none more so than the first small kinds piercing hard ground in winter cold. I shall always be tempted by those bright catalogue pictures and those cellophane packs in the garden shops. □



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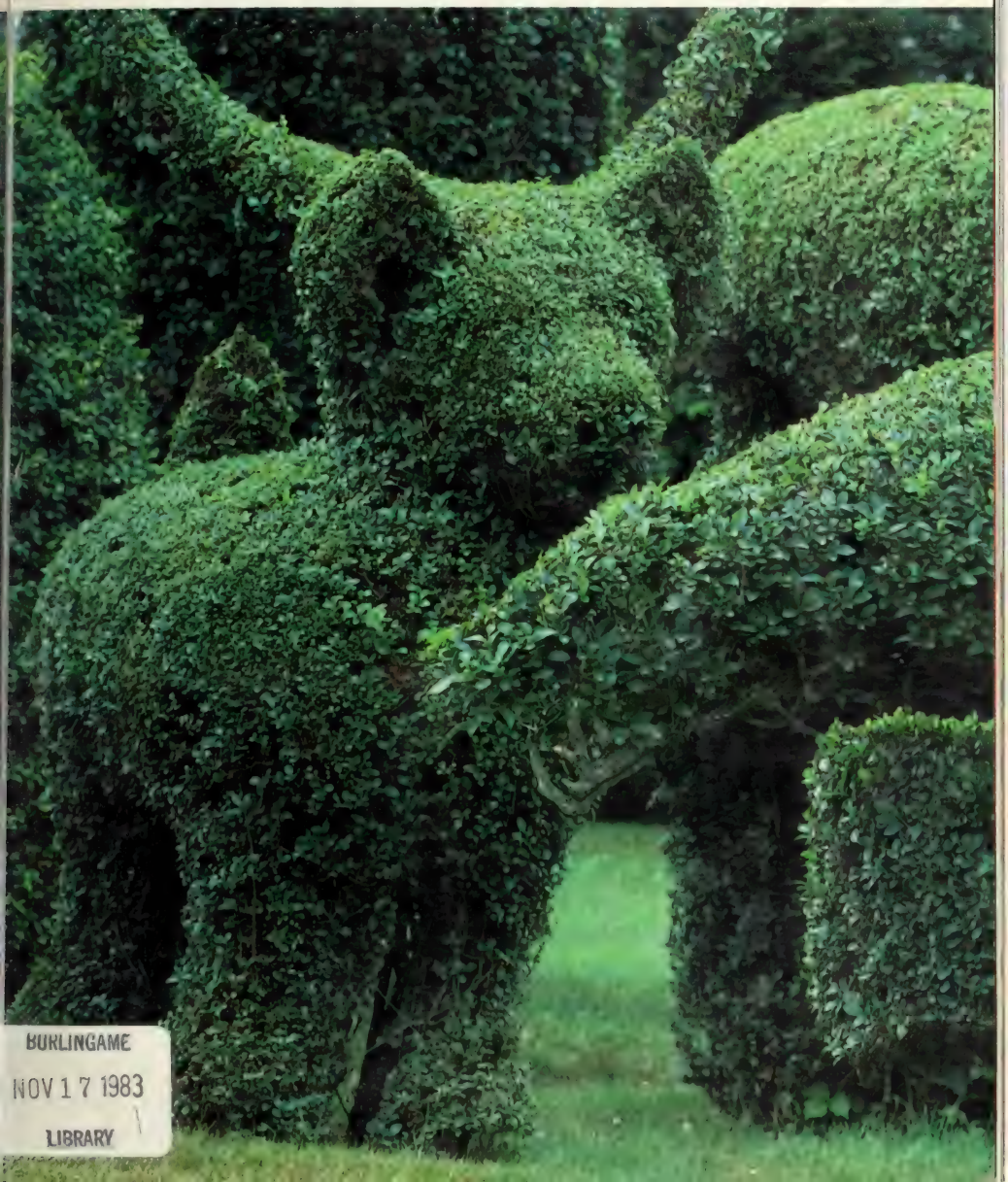
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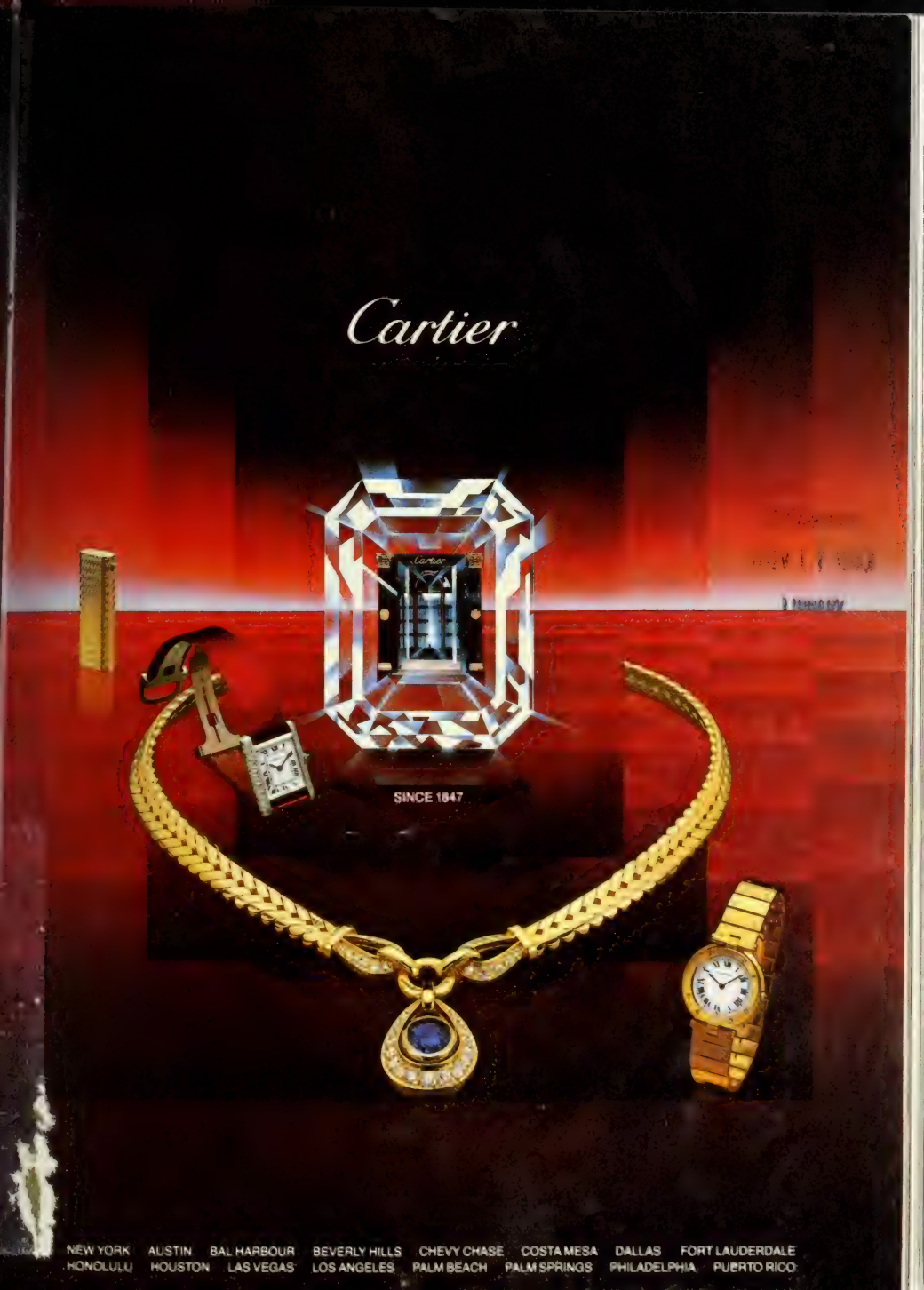
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Le Pigeonnier Saint-Jean
By Anita Pereire and Gabrielle van Zuylen

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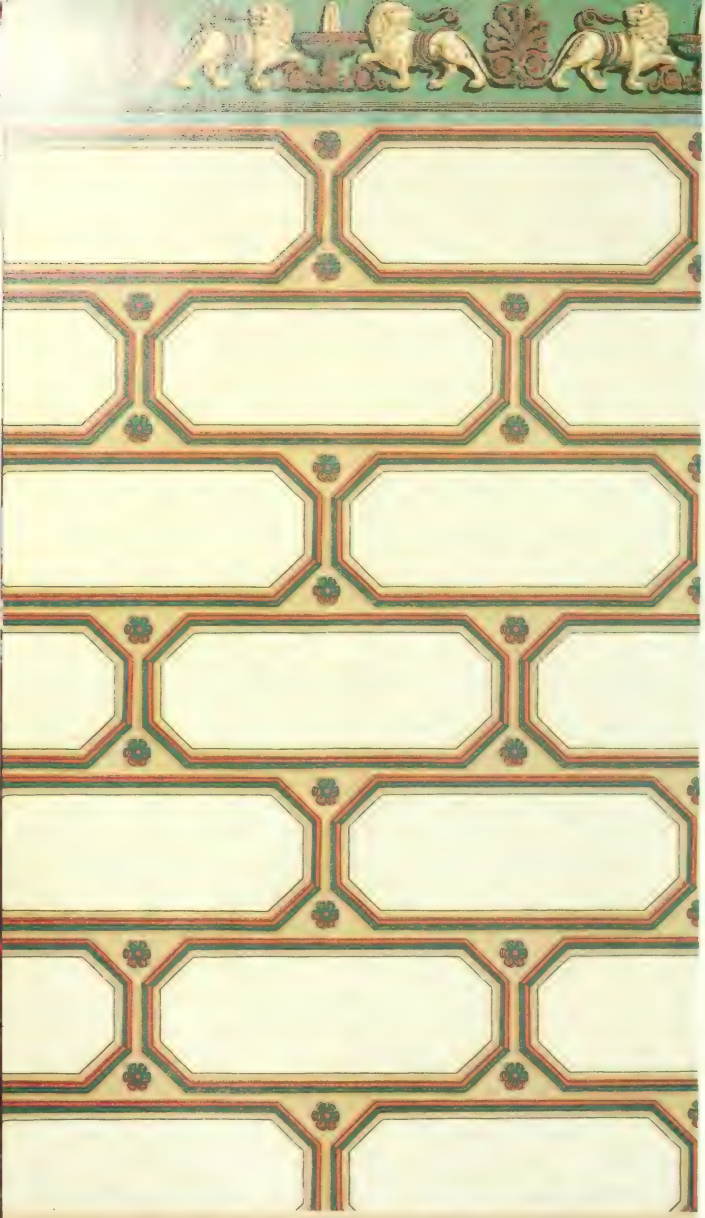
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Although it means we have to begin our Christmas shopping in July, we always think of the December House & Garden as a Christmas present to our readers. Maybe that's because we still believe in the special magic of Christmas, that season of the year when we teeter between the ridiculous and the sublime, never knowing which way it is all going to come out. Besides the magic, I simply love presents, and one of our criteria for a special magazine is that it be a good gift each month. And so, in the middle of July this year, we dispatched photographer Evelyn Hofer into the deep woods of West Germany to photograph a tree Ludwig Beck decorated with four thousand ornaments just for us, or more accurately, just for you. The poem that accompanies it, Thomas Merton's *Carol,* communicates our feelings as we approach "this holy time."

The pages that follow are rich in good reading, but we're particularly proud to have Mary McCarthy's "Indomitable Alice Brayton." A must, the section on Miss Brayton's peculiar gift exchange at Christmas is not only funny but thought-provoking as we rush pell-mell into the busiest days of the year.

Books always make good presents and I hope *The Anatomy Lesson* will be under our Christmas tree. We were delighted that its author, Philip Roth, and Claire Bloom permitted House & Garden to send Sheila Metzner and Jesse Kornbluth to pay them a visit for our photo-essay on their life together in the New England farmhouse they have shared for the past seven years. It is there that Philip Roth produced one book a year from 1971 to 1975, which was possible, Roth says, "largely because of this place and the discipline."

Like Roth, the artist Georg Baselitz has some fascinating things to say about the place of his own place—a castle in West Germany—in his life and work. "I am merely trying to make my surroundings beautiful, to isolate myself from ugliness," Georg Baselitz says. One of the ways he does that is by collecting African carved figures, because they give him "a feeling of peace."

There's a mysterious presence in the enchanting new garden of Yves Saint Laurent and Pierre Bergé, as well, but I'll let you discover it in the portfolio on pages 110 to 115, where Fleur Champin describes a garden that is well on its way to becoming one of the late twentieth century's best creations. Although the impressionistic photographs of the sixty-odd acres near Deauville are beautiful in themselves, we particularly wanted to include them in this issue to add our applause to The Metropolitan Museum of Art's salute to Yves Saint Laurent in December. As we look at Saint Laurent and Bergé's land, we are doubly amused by architect Calvin Tsao's comment that "everyone needs to have his own little garden." Amused because his garden is a greenhouse flat of growing grass placed among the other idiosyncratic objects in his surreal New York apartment. Such interesting allusions, plus the handsome spaces and original designs he has created for his rooms, make this a very special apartment indeed.



Massimo Morozzi's Tangram table for Cassina

That special things come in very different packages is seen in two stories we placed in tandem in this issue: one, "A Storybook House," page 152, the other, "The Sorcerer's Eye," page 158. In the first, a cleverly frugal design by New York architects Bentley/LaRosa/Salasky illustrates how fine a modest house can be. Photographed in the winter snow of Maine, it is, as Heather MacIsaac tells us, every child's drawing of "house." But closer inspection reveals much more, a sophisticated design that is far from conventional or commonplace. The second look required when perusing the "Fantasy Island" sorcerer Tony Duquette created is to take in all the riches encompassed in the house he and his wife designed when they were first married over thirty years ago. Designer/artist Duquette makes us all want to release the child in us as we approach this magical time of the year.

Which brings us back to Christmas. Every year, all year long, I hint broadly at the thing I most want, but my wife, Jane, has unbelievably poor recall when it comes time to buy my Christmas present. So this year I took her with me to the 23rd Salone del Mobile in Milan, the annual design fair where I always fall for the wonderful Italian furniture and lighting design, hoping she'd catch my enthusiasms firsthand. At this Salone it was the Tangram table for Cassina. Obviously the designer Massimo Morozzi combines the sorcery of Tony Duquette, the sophistication of Calvin Tsao, and the imagination of Mary McCarthy. His design: a table of seven elements that can be used one next to the other to create configurations of different shapes and sizes. My daughters always want a really big tree, but we'll need one as big as the Christmas tree in West Germany if that table is going to go under it.

Lou Gropp

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ISAAC STERN

The musical mentor who saved Carnegie Hall plays the telephone as expertly as his priceless violin

By Caroline Seebohm

There is a painting by the Biedermeier painter Carl Spitzweg entitled *The Poor Poet,* which depicts the distraught hero in his attic, huddled in a blanket, with an umbrella over his head to protect him from the pathetically inadequate ceiling. It would be difficult to imagine a portrait of the artist that less resembled Isaac Stern. Performers by repute are difficult types, unworldly and unmaterialistic, preferring the rarefied ether of art. Isaac Stern violates all these myths, wielding as much influence in American life as many a corporation president and selling out Carnegie Hall at his every appearance.

It's a rare combination in a musician, and it emerged late. Isaac Stern's parents emigrated from Russia to San Francisco in 1921, when Stern was 10 months old, and the young prodigy played his first recital in 1934, when he was 14. He made his San Francisco Symphony debut two years later playing the Brahms Violin Concerto. Through the forties and fifties he consolidated his reputation as one of the most brilliant violinists of his generation, becoming a founding member of the Isaac Stern–Eugene Istomin–Leonard Rose trio and making a large number of recordings. Audiences grew to love the smallish, plump, almost Falstaffian figure as he stepped onto the stage, smiled broadly at his colleagues, then plunged lyrically into the music. Critics praised his ardor and expressiveness and commented on his instinctive, inspired interpretations of both traditional and modern works.

Although Stern insists that his "root base" is performing music, one gets the impression that he never took the performing role as deadly seriously as some. He has always addressed his violin colloquially as his "fiddle." He has never fussed with his fiddle. "The violin changes with the weather," explains Jacques Français, the famous string doctor and collector who has worked on Isaac Stern's instruments for fifteen years. "Some performers come in every day for adjustments with the bridge, the strings. Isaac couldn't care less. He has two great fiddles. If one goes wrong, there's always the other." This attitude can be dangerous, and sometimes Stern has been accused of being poorly prepared for concerts; but if he's off in rehearsal, he's generally superb in performance, and he has the power to communicate music under almost any circumstances. (And people call on him all the time, such as the occasion of a Covent Garden *Die Fledermaus,* for which Birgit Nilsson cancelled her guest appearance at the last minute. Zubin Mehta, the conductor and a close friend of Stern's, persuaded the violinist on Thursday to fly over by Concorde on Friday and perform the last movement of Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E Minor on Saturday; he was home again in Connecticut on Sunday.)

But by the late fifties, the performing stage was becoming an inadequate outlet for Stern's prodigious energies. He had reached a pinnacle as an artist and seemed ready to practice his powerful communi- *(Continued on page 18)*


CLINIQUE

(Continued from page 16) cative skills in a wider context. By a quirk of fate, precisely the right cause was waiting to engage him. In late 1959, New York City decided that Carnegie Hall was to be demolished in favor of a red high-rise. The musical world was stunned, and no one more so than Isaac Stern. "Carnegie Hall was mother to us all," he says now, his voice still heated with indignation. "It was where we went to hear the greatest music of our time, where the legends played, and it was where we as novices gained our stamp of approval. It was the concert hall where the history of musical performance was created. To imagine that this place could be touched was inconceivable."

The first "war meeting" to save Carnegie Hall was held in Isaac Stern's Central Park West apartment on January 10, 1960. A corporation was formed under the chairmanship of James D. Wolfensohn, and Mr. Stern and his allies succeeded in taking the necessary legal and political steps to give Carnegie Hall landmark status (as well as to initiate, in 1982, a $20-million renovation of the building). "It was Isaac Stern who mobilized the group who saved Carnegie Hall," says James Wolfensohn. "It could not have been done without him."

Saving the building, a major triumph in itself, was only the beginning of Stern's involvement with Carnegie Hall. As president of the Carnegie Hall corporation, he remains in close touch as the massive renovation plans continue to fall into place—a fourteen-month plan to reconstruct the main lobby, install automatic elevators, and build two matching arched façades at the 57th Street entrance being only the initial stage. Stern worries about the Italian Renaissance–style architecture, the air-conditioning system, the traffic flow. "The lady's 92 years old," he says. "She needs a face-lift." But most of all he worries about preserving the hall's unique acoustics throughout this traumatic phase of reconstruction, acoustics that both performers and critics alike regard with an almost mystical admiration. Abraham Meltzer, a distinguished Israeli acoustician who recently improved the Salle Pleyel in Paris, has been hired to protect the famous honeyed sound of the hall.

It was probably his efforts on behalf of Carnegie Hall more than anything else that took Isaac Stern out of the realms of artistic aloofness and into the world of real people. One revelation during those intense months of lobbying was that he had a splendid facility for public speaking. "I had to stand up and talk about things and found to my surprise I could do it. It came about out of necessity, but later I began to make use of it in other activities."

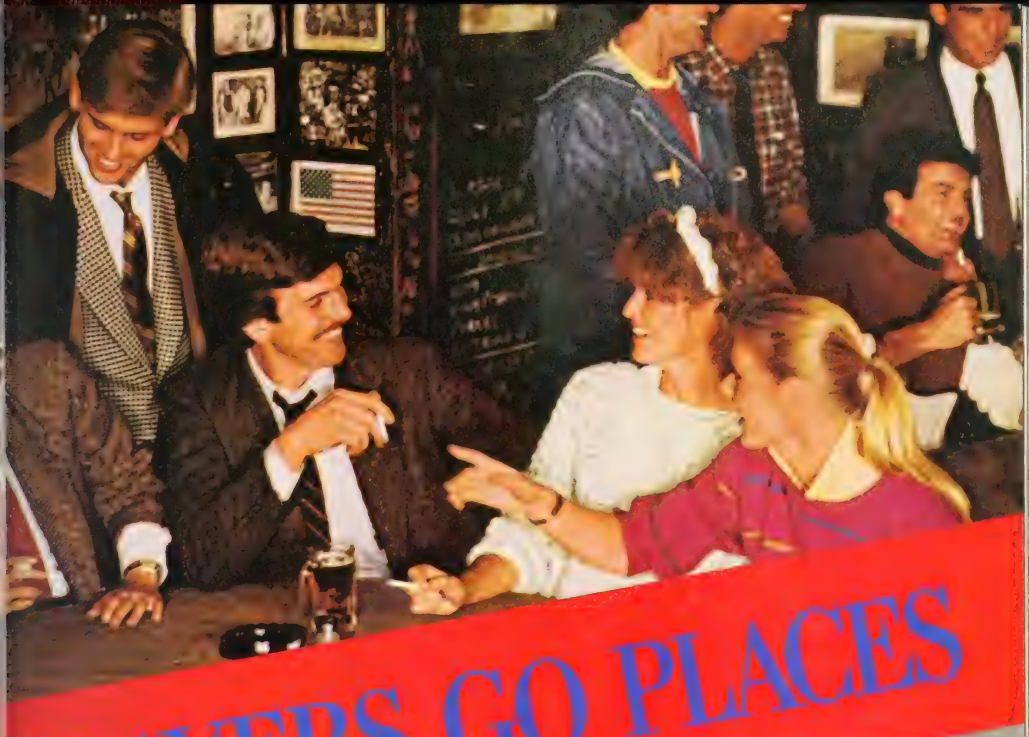
The National Council on the Arts, the America-Israel Cultural Foundation, the Jerusalem Music Center, countless arts benefits and organizations—these are some of the institutions to which Isaac Stern devotes his energies and talents for speechifying. His gifts as a raconteur are legendary, but they are always in aid of the same cause—music. "The violin is simply a means to an end," explains the artist, "to make music. Everything I do—television, films, the National Endowment, records—has to do with music, its performances, and its place in what we call civilized life." Since this is his guiding principle, it is not surprising that the other major focus of his energies is young people.

Many artists take on young students, and the influence of such performers as Jascha Heifetz, Gregor Piatigorsky, and Leonard Rose can be seen and heard in the string sections of most major American orchestras. But few have made the contribution that Isaac Stern has made, not only in personally intervening to help struggling students, but also in having a seemingly clairvoyant sense for spotting major talent. "He has an unerring sense of art," says Lee Lamont, his manager at ICM Artists. "He has been right more often than most people." His most famous protégés are Pinchas Zukerman, who was only nine years old when Stern first heard him play in Israel, Itzak Perlman, Miriam Fried, Shlomo Mintz, Yo-Yo Ma, and Yefim Bronfman. Every week someone will call him and ask him to listen to a tape or attend an audition. During his vast travels, people beleaguer him with stories of young talent that must be heard. "I suppose I have a comprehension or a sympathy for the art of communication," says Stern. "It comes from listening to music, particularly to young people play. It's not mistakes in notes or inaccuracy of fingering that you look out for. It's *do they demand your ears?*"

He finds it hard to say no to the appeals, and when he likes someone, he does all he can to help. "Isaac is my mentor, my father, my pal," Zukerman once said of Stern, who helped both Zukerman and Perlman come to America, developing their careers and looking after their families. Stern still keeps a firm eye on his musical children, and few major decisions are made without his consultation.

There are those who say that he is *too* influential as a molder of careers, that there is an inner circle of Stern protégés who get all the plum jobs, that there is a "Jewish mafia" controlled by Stern. There are those who say that this power is used in the most influential way possible, that is, in the Carnegie Hall programing. He intensely dislikes these accusations. "In all my years at Carnegie Hall I have never insisted on an artist appearing or stopped an artist appearing," he declares. "I wish my influence were half as effective as some people seem to imagine. You can't stop someone who really has talent. All you can do is ease the path or channel the energy in the most advantageous direction." No one will deny that this is what he has done. The fact that a nine-year-old child in some tiny village in America or Israel may one day be playing center stage in the greatest concert halls of the world may to some extent be thanks to Isaac Stern.

As people began to call on his gifts as a communicator, he moved farther and farther out of the concert halls and into the boardrooms. His schedule is packed with nonperforming assignments; in fact, his yearly itinerary is not released by his management because "if too many people knew where he was all the time he would never have a moment to do anything." Stern's wife of some thirty years, Vera, manages much of his *(Continued on page 20)*



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(Continued from page 18) personal life and plays an essential role in the Stern machine. He sometimes hides in his country house in Connecticut, where he can rest (a word not in his vocabulary), practice, and study new music.

Wherever he is, he lives on the telephone, almost as though the instrument were another violin. Anyone making a study of Stern's daily life would have to reckon with Ma Bell, for he is constantly either making or receiving a call from his many business and musical colleagues all over the world. "It is probably true that he sacrificed his instrumental career for stocks and bonds, saving theaters, developing young artists, promoting music generally," says a colleague. "But what's so terrible about that?" Lee Lamont thinks that Stern would have been successful regardless of the career he chose. "That's what makes him different from other musicians. He is so hungry for information. He wants to learn about everything from microwave ovens to governments. He is not always practical. But he often makes the impractical work."

In spite of his phenomenal schedule, Stern takes the time to attend to his more epicurean needs, admitting candidly to an abiding passion for good food, wine, and cigars. The picture comes to mind of the violinist deep in discussion (in French) with his veteran housekeeper, Marthe, about the various properties of red caviar. "And now, do you have the cookies I like so much?" he asks, looking up with the hopeful expression of a young boy. "No," says the housekeeper firmly.

"I am a sybaritic person and surround myself with comforts," he confesses. "But I've worked hard for them. When I grew up, to be a member of the San Francisco Symphony was to be *somebody*. Now, orchestral musicians are some of the best paid and protected members of any profession, and artistry has given way to artisanship. Today, material things outweigh the fire in the belly, and I think there is a danger of complacency. It's worthwhile if you are a musician to say thank you sometimes for the privilege."

James Wolfensohn, Stern's longtime Carnegie Hall colleague, believes that Stern's most original talent lies not only in his innate gift of musicianship, but in the ability to pass on his gift to

others. "Few musicians can do this as powerfully as Isaac can." This is proved overwhelmingly in the film about Isaac Stern's 1979 visit to China, *From Mao to Mozart: Isaac Stern in China,* which won an Academy Award. Anyone who has seen it will remember with delight the image of this vigorous, enthusiastic, and ultimately inspired artist showing a handful of Chinese students not only how to play with fire in the belly but also how to communicate joy in music.

Stern broke down all barriers, physical and emotional, during that trip. "At the beginning we were worried about how to handle the language barrier," executive producer Walker Scheuer recalls. "Should we have an interpreter on film? Should we have English subtitles? We deferred the decision until we saw the footage and realized that when Isaac Stern was on stage there really *was* no language barrier." Professor Tan, then deputy director of the Shanghai Conservatory where Stern gave some of his classes, recently visited New York and said that he and his colleagues had found Mr. Stern to be "very frank, very outspoken. Other musicians would come to us and praise the school and the students. Mr. Stern said what he thought. Some thought this arrogant, but he is frank, and that is good."

"If I have been critical," Stern tells the exhilarated students at the end of his visit, "it is only because I wanted to share with you my faith, my abiding belief both in music and young people. I believe between the two of them the world is a better place—and if I have left that behind, I'll be very grateful."

Isaac Stern is accustomed to having the last word, but as one estimates the contribution to American life of this chubby, pink-cheeked fiddler with his fluffy white hair and spectacles permanently pushed back over his head, Pinchas Zukerman says it best: "When everything has been said about Isaac, the one thing that stands out is his close contact with young people. Not only teaching them, but also replenishing himself by being around them. It's something I have picked up also—that to maintain one's standards one must keep abreast of what is happening among young artists. That is what Isaac does, and to me, above all, that is the greatest value of this human being." □

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CELEBRATIONS IN AN AGE OF ANXIETY

By Lee Hall

W.H. Auden, seeking poetry in our century torn by wars, confused by ideologies, revealed and hidden by psychoanalysis, and seemingly bereft of institutions that had provided stability and direction for individuals in the past, spoke of *the age of anxiety.* Auden was a poet for his age as well as for himself, and the term stuck. The Age of Anxiety, indeed, became a slogan that is summoned to explain puzzling experience and vague feelings of loss and aloneness that characterize the emotional life of modern human beings. The same slogan may be invoked as a soother against doubts, fears, concerns, and alienation that surround contemporary life. In identifying objects and circumstances as belonging to the age of anxiety, we set up an umbrella-protection that, by inference, argues, "I am not lost for I am one among many anxious individuals." Our separate anxieties, however diverse or similar, define our only common experience in being alive and in being members of the same species.

It is ironic that we have adopted anxiety and alienation as the major theme—perhaps the sole theme—of the modern arts and, in claiming such a theme, have almost exclusively dealt with works of art as outward manifestations of the inner condition of conflict, anxiety, and alienation. Thus, in fulfilling a prophecy, we preclude by our mindset evidences of other ideas, images, themes, or even feelings. We limit experience and, therefore, intensify anxiety.

Other themes, however, do run through the art of this age and, specifically, through the works of artists who found their images and honed their talents since World War II. One such theme is celebration.

Many paintings, exuberant and spontaneous in execution and mood, are born of an individual artist's celebration of paint or color, are sprung from his joy in his search for an image and from his appreciation of being keenly alive and in command of a daring craft. While, of course, this is no more *the* age of celebration than *the* age of anxiety, I believe important messages at the heart of American painting are neglected too often because we expect only anxiety, only despair, and only the dry hustings from loss of faith.

In a society that accepts its outlines and therefore its identity from the too-slightly examined forces of industrialization, technology, death-of-God theology, insensitive governance, psychoanalysis, *(Continued on page 29)*

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Is any cook in your life still using obsolet time-consuming kitchen equipment?

To give a Cuisinart food processor is to give a gift of both time and pleasure. It saves up to 90% of the time needed to perform many tedious tasks with lesser appliances. And it will delight its owner by doing these jobs effortlessly and well.

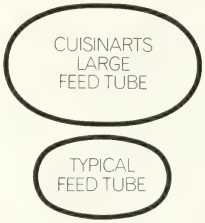
The food processor has become the essential workhorse of today's kitchen. This is largely due to the many Cuisinart innovations that enable it to accomplish procedures that are difficult or impossible in other machines.

THE EXCLUSIVE CUISINART ADVANTAGES.

Cuisinart food processors have motors so powerful and efficient, they keep performing when many others would stop. The Cuisinart DLC-7 PRO, for example, can produce batch after batch of bread dough—up to 3½ lbs. each, depending on the type of dough—without overheating or stalling.

Our wide work bowls and patented chopping blades enable you to chop large quantities of meat at one time, or make uniformly smooth, thick purées of vegetables and fruits.

The exclusive Cuisinart Large Feed Tube lets you slice whole tomatoes, oranges, potatoes, onions. (The feed tube on our newest model, the DLC-X, is so large, you can even slice a grapefruit in it!)



The exclusive Cuisinart Large Feed Tube easily accommodates whole fruits and vegetables that would not fit in the standard feed tubes of other food processors.



The detachable stem twists on and off in an instant, making disc storage easy and space-saving.

Our patented slicing discs produce perfect slices from thin to thick, without cracking, breaking, or tearing their edges.

Our patented detachable stem, standard on all models except the DLC-10E, makes disc storage easy and space-saving.

The dough blade, a Cuisinart invention, is made of the hardest plastic we could find—so that it can knead even large batches of dough quickly, thoroughly and effortlessly.

WHICH CUISINART FOOD PROCESSOR MAKES THE RIGHT GIFT?

If your gift is for someone with a large family (your own?), for someone who entertains on a large scale, or for someone who simply loves to cook, we suggest one of our two largest-capacity models, the DLC-7 PRO or the even larger DLC-X. If it's for someone who cooks on a more modest scale, then consider our DLC-8F or our most economical, smallest model, the DLC-10E.

The nicest part about giving a Cuisinart food processor is that whether you choose our largest or our smallest model, you have the good feeling of knowing you are giving the best.

For the recipes for all of the dishes shown opposite, and more of our favorite holiday recipes, write Cuisinarts, Inc., 411 (I) W. Putnam Avenue, Greenwich, CT 06830.




Cuisinart
FOOD PROCESSOR
CAUTION: READ INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE USING.
ON
PULSE/OFF

FOR SOMEONE WHO ALREADY DOES.

If someone on your gift list already owns one of our food processors, giving even one of our many optional accessories will greatly increase the usefulness of that machine.

ALL THE EXTRAS.

Having all the optional discs enables the owner to realize the machine's full potential. That is why for the first time, we are offering—at very considerable savings—gift sets containing all the detachable-stem discs made for the DLC-X, the DLC-7 and the DLC-8 series. Included is a complete range of slicing discs that will produce any thickness from wafer-thin slices of cucumbers, to thick, juicy slabs of tomatoes. Also, two julienne discs that make long, perfectly square "match-stick" strips of raw vegetables for salads or cooking; our French fry cut disc that instantly converts a raw potato into perfect ¼" square sticks; and a fine shredding disc that produces beautiful, lacy shreds of chocolate and coconut, or superfine shreds of cheese for tacos and pizza.

Each of these discs is also available individually. They make unusual and useful stocking stuffers.



Our new gift sets contain complete sets of optional discs for the DLC-X, the DLC-7 and the DLC-8 series, at considerable

OUR CONVENIENT STORAGE CENTERS.

Anyone who already owns some of our optional discs will appreciate one of our specially designed disc holders.

Shown below, for example, is an exceptionally compact construction that occupies only 6 square inches of counter space, yet provides accessible, safe storage for up to 7 detachable-stem discs of the DLC-X, the DLC-7 or DLC-8 series.

Other disc holders are designed to hang on the wall or inside a cabinet, and are available for both fixed-stem and detachable-stem discs.

FOR OWNERS OF OUR EARLIER MODELS.

Our Large Feed Tube Kits bring some of our latest improvements to owners of earlier model Cuisinart food processors. These kits contain a cover with the Large Feed Tube opening, a large and a small pusher, and two of our improved slicing discs. (The discs in the kits for our DLC-7 and DLC-8 series feature the convenient detachable stem.)

Giving a Large Feed Tube Kit is the next best thing to giving a new Cuisinart food processor.

FOR SOMEONE WITH AN APPETITE FOR FRESH PASTA.

By giving a Cuisinart Pasta Attachment, you will introduce someone to the pleasures of fresh home-made pasta.





(This attachment is available for any of our DLC-7 and DLC-8 model food processors.)

Our Pasta Attachment takes advantage of the powerful Cuisinart food processor motor to produce pasta of professional quality, faster than most pasta machines. And it's easy to be creative, because the dough is mixed in the bowl of the food processor. For example, adding some Parmesan or Romano cheese produces an appetizing yellow color along with the taste of the cheese. Other good variations: some chopped spinach, a touch of curry—even some ground-up hot chili peppers.

The Pasta Attachment comes with 6 interchangeable discs to produce lasagne, fettuccine, spaghetti, linguine, macaroni, and spaghettini. It also makes surprisingly large quantities of crackers, cookies, and even tortilla chips in many flavors.

FOR SOMEONE TO WHOM COOKING IS A JOY, A MEANS OF EXPRESSION.

Anyone who receives a Cuisinart food processor soon discovers a whole new world of creative cooking. Complex and time-consuming recipes become quick, easy, and fun.

For the creative cook on your gift list, we suggest these publications from the Cuisinart Cooking Club, Inc.

"The Pleasures of Cooking," our bimonthly magazine, is truly a cooking school in print. It contains no advertising; each issue is entirely devoted to cooking, with step-by-step pictures to make every procedure clear. All our



recipes are so well presented it is practically impossible to fail. Many of them cannot be found anywhere else. Every issue features articles by bright, new stars in the cooking world, as well as by the great names of the gourmet establishment. Subscriptions are $15 for 1 year (6 issues), $27 for 2 years (12 issues). Add $3/year for subscriptions mailed to Canada, Mexico and overseas.

"Abby Mandel's Cuisinart Classroom" is the outstanding cookbook of the food processor revolution. Abby Mandel, food processor columnist for *Bon Appétit* magazine, is one of the few American teaching chefs to have worked in the 3-star kitchens of Europe. Her book contains 230 outstanding food processor recipes, many of them from these great restaurants. She reveals her exclusive technique for whipping egg whites in the food processor, for perfectly textured mousses, soufflés, omelets, sponge cakes, tortes... all in one work bowl. The easy-to-handle spiral-bound book comes in a durable transparent slip case to display and protect recipes while cooking. It is $19.95 plus $1.00 shipping charge.

"Cuisine of the American Southwest" by Texan Anne Greer presents over 263 tempting recipes featuring new and old Mexican-American favorites. Almost all recipes use the food processor and more than 150 color photographs teach techniques and illustrate this festive food. Food columnist and television chef, Anne Greer is an expert on food processing techniques. The book is $19.95 ($22.50 after 1/1/84) plus $1.00 shipping charge.

Any of these publications may be ordered by sending the indicated payment to: Cuisinart Cooking Club, 411 (I) W. Putnam Avenue, Greenwich, CT 06830. Or call toll-free: (800) 243-8540. We accept Visa, Master Charge and American Express. Orders received by December 16 should reach their destination in time for Christmas.





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FOR ANYONE WHO LOVES GOOD FOOD.

We would like to send you some of our favorite recipes to help make your holiday cooking faster, easier, and more creative. Our holiday stollen, for example, is an unusual combination of fruits and nuts, all chopped and mixed in the yeast dough in the Cuisinart food processor with just a few touches of the "Pulse" lever. Our colorful festive salad (from Gérard Boyer's 3-star restaurant in Reims) takes less than 2 minutes in the DLC-7 PRO. Each of our delicious cookie doughs takes 1 minute to make in any of our machines (over 3 lbs. in the DLC-7 PRO, more than 6 lbs. in the DLC-X).

For these and other recipes, as well as more information about our food processors and accessories, our cookware and our publications, write: Cuisinarts, Inc., 411 (I) W. Putnam Avenue, Greenwich, CT 06830.

Cuisinarts

Artists, battered by the shadows and signs of anxiety, gnaw away at individuality as if it were the only bone in town

(Continued from page 22) and increasing urbanization, a critical language has grown into a jungle around the germ of anxiety. Artists, however, have embraced enthusiastically the basic humanistic concept of individuality, of each person containing some module of order that reflects and relates to a larger cosmos, whether that cosmos consists merely of other human beings or of all living matter or of all matter, organic or inorganic, in the universe.



Tangerine, 1964, by Helen Frankenthaler. Private collection, courtesy Andre Emmerich Gallery, New York.

To affirm individuality, as every artist must, is to proclaim humanism and hope. Artists, however battered by the shadows and signs of anxiety in the twentieth century, gnaw away at individuality as if it were the only bone in town. They act out in their work an earlier American artist's prophetic dictum. Marsden Hartley said once that "Painters must paint for their own edification and pleasure. . . . The thought of the time is the emotion of the time. . . ."

Stripped of the universal symbolism and easily communicable meaning that was once provided artists by churches, governments, or powerful patrons now anxious about anxiety itself, artists take action and, in so doing, become creators. That is, in choosing to concentrically encircle space with color, Kenneth Noland creates particular shapes energized by those circles. Moreover, until he gave these singular circles existence, until he acted with paint upon the idea of circle, there was neither object nor being. He willed and acted into being a particular configuration, a particular metaphor for order. However arbitrary the initial creative act—and, after all, Robert Rauschenberg insists that there is no such thing as an empty canvas—action itself opposes anxiety.

Thus, anxiety fuels an individual artist. It runs behind him, nipping at his heels and herding him in uncertain directions. As he flees the anxiety, perhaps babbling about it all the while, he chooses directions and materials and he proclaims individuality by the action he takes to escape anxiety. Eventually, he exalts individuality, denies alienation, proclaims *I am* in his work.

In so celebrating his own being, he celebrates being in general, celebrates humanity and brings into alignment his module of order and existence with the larger cosmographic map that he infers from his own experience. This celebration of being, this joy in search, is as much at the core of modern art as are the darker shadows and more melodramatic tones of anxiety and alienation. They may, after all, be merely two sides of the same coin, with anxiety always laid out face up.

It is precisely the artist who creates *from* alienation and anxiety *to* form. Barnett Newman, from his interest in primitive art and his keen analytical examination of himself and his fellow artists in the post–World War II period, knew this and wrote in *Tiger's Eye* "We are asserting man's natural desire for the exalted, for a concern with our relationship to the absolute emotions. . . . The image we produce is the self-evident one of revelation, real and concrete. . . ."

Newman recognized that he and other American artists were consciously painting for their own pleasure—after all, *(Continued on page 30)*



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If one judged only from the works themselves, one would grasp as much joy and sense of celebration as anxiety and despair

(Continued from page 29) who else was looking?—in the faith that the results would necessarily be absolute and universal, available to all other human beings who attempted to step aside from the pressures of anxiety that lead to alienation. In brief, Newman holds out a promise of both pleasure and clarity in art.

It is always possible to sit in the mud-trough of blameless self-pity and to become the soiled, anxious, and alienated victim of conditions beyond personal control. This, in fact, is the role that is popularly established for the artist to step into. It is, however, not the major artists of our period who have acceded to this nihilism. Indeed if they were to take to flood the tides of anxiety and alienation available in popular attitude, they would encase themselves in despair and produce nothing: they would know that personal pleasure did not exist and that exaltation could not be found. But, by any reasonable measure, this is a fecund period in the history of art. Artists are at work and, whether they earn a living from that work or have to support themselves through other efforts, they continue to work. For personal pleasure. In pursuit of exaltation.

In working at making art, they determine to stem the tide of anxiety, to reroute their energies, to create in a time when images have no guaranteed universal currency, a celebration of individuality. Without portfolio or fancy manifesto, then, American artists have moved in among the major keepers of traditional humanism.

Anxiety may be at the root of the prolific creative surge among American artists since 1945 but, if one judged only from the works themselves, if one attended to the works and not the cacophony of criticism that often obscures them, one would find considerable embodiment and evocation of joy, would grasp as much joy and sense of celebration as anxiety and despair.

Pollock saw his work in terms of the danced sand paintings of southwestern Indians, an exalted view of pleasurable activity in the service of high purpose. Barnett Newman, always trying to purify and paint the most tenuously drawn theories of art, found pleasure in painting, found the act of painting to be itself an arbitrary statement of determined hope. Franz Kline's yes-and-no black-and-white paintings, with yes sometimes white and sometimes black, are records of the artist's hash-settling muscular treatments of spatial decisions that began with an arbitrary black act on a white surface, an arbitrary and positive assertion of the artist's existence and ability to act.

As Helen Frankenthaler exercises control over the seemingly spontaneous flow of paint across a surface, she celebrates that surface as well as her own powers to control and to know the process by which a painting comes to signal the artist's *I am.* Similarly, Jules Olitski frets a surface with colored substance, pigment and filler, until that surface correctly reflects his own sense of being.

All of the artists cited are related in some manner to abstract expressionism but, as general examples, they record one theme in contemporary art as it is wrested from the age of anxiety. While their works may be born of their flight from anxiety dished up to them in an age consistently described as *dehumanizing,* the works themselves become the embodiments of their makers' creative and positive decisions not to be dehumanized, not to be stripped of individuality, and not to be defanged and deactivated by despair and depression, by anxiety and alienation. While those same works may, in the process of coming into being, reflect the artist's uncertainties, struggles against anxiety, or loss of certain equilibrium, once they are completed and released by the artist into a larger community, they are themselves. They have being and, in that state, they are not tokens or amulets of anxiety. They are, rather, existent celebrations. They, like the artists, are modules of larger order that richly includes joy as well as despair. □



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THE BIRDS OF SOUTH AMERICA

Stalking the Golden-collared Toucanet and the Lyre-tailed Nightjar through Amazonia and the Andes

By Alice Gordon

That New York City and even strife-torn Central America existed only hours to the north seemed absurd from the upper corner of the vast Amazon Basin. We were half-way between the equator and the first southern parallel, about 180 miles east of the Pacific as a wayward Andean Condor might fly it, in the utterly wild forest of Ecuador's Oriente Province. The vaporous heat of the Oriente is unremitting, like the outlandishly beautiful dense vegetation it shrouds. For well-informed foreigners in the Oriente, the heat is compounded by regular applications of Cutter's Insect Repellent, closing off the skin from insects and air like a layer of Saran Wrap. But these bothers are insignificant on a bird-watching trip with Rose Ann and John Rowlett, because one's overriding concern is for what peeps from the brush, hops through the trees, flies overhead, or simply sits on a stump.

Rose Ann and John Rowlett are a sister and brother from Austin, Texas, who have been bird-watching since they were old enough to hold binoculars. For six and seven years respectively, Rosie and John have been leading tours to South America and elsewhere for Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT), based in Austin. Besides being two of the world's most agreeable people, they are renowned in ornithological circles: in particular, Rosie's ear can identify bird calls no one else seems to hear; John's squeak is legendary, higher pitched than most humans can emit and therefore near-perfect for the imitations of small animals in distress that lure birds into his view. When they see a particularly sought-after bird, Rosie and John utter a goofy, childlike "Yip yip!" One of many ways to gauge the success of a VENT tour is how many other people are unselfconsciously yip-yipping by trip's end.

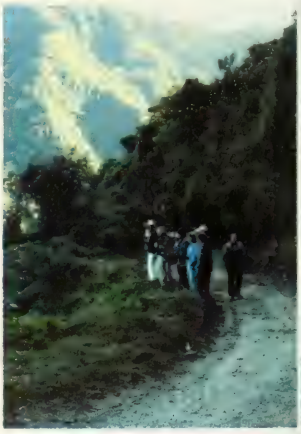
My plans to join Rosie and John on the last leg of their tour to Ecuador (one week in the Andes after the time in Amazonia) included the determination to enjoy the landscape when I didn't comprehend its avian complexity, which I suspected would be often. Besides Rosie, John, and myself, our group numbered three doctors and a nurse, a sculptor, a college administrator, a high-school student, a scientist and his wife, a university-press editor, an English inventor and his girl friend, a writer, a child psychologist, and a housewife. We *(Continued on page 34)*



Early morning on the Flotel Francisco de Orellana, a 54-passenger boat hotel moored to the bank of the Rio Napo, one of the three largest Ecuadorian tributaries to the Amazon River.



The stairway around this two-hundred-foot-tall kapok tree in Ecuador's Oriente Province was built by the BBC for a television nature series and is now a prized spot for bird watchers.



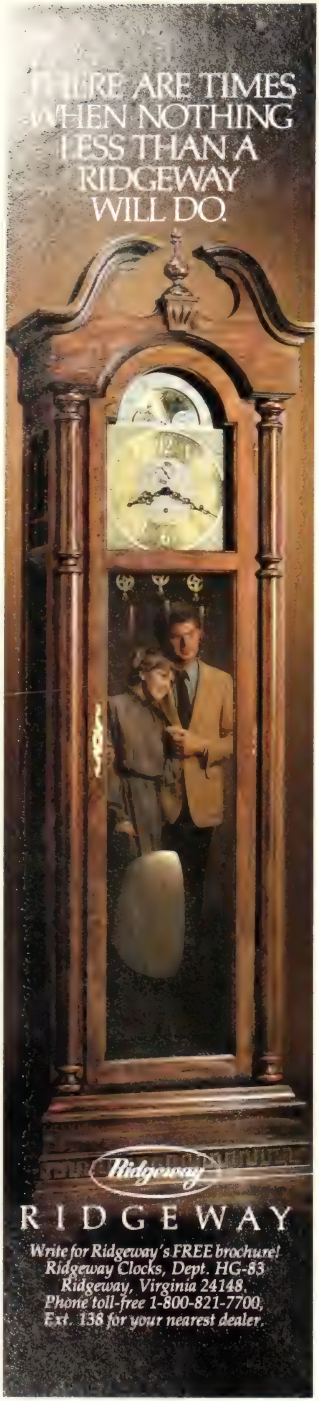
Birding in the Andes around Quito is a series of leisurely walks and long, quiet stops when a bird calls or flies. VENT tour leaders John and Rose Ann Rowlett are at far left of group.



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McGUIRE



(Continued from page 32) ranged in age from sixteen to sixty. Discounting my small contribution, we had over a hundred years of bird-watching experience between us. As eighteen people who were often elbow-to-elbow, simultaneously pointing our binoculars at one prime specimen, we became a curiously intimate bunch.

Our plane had landed at the oil-boom town of Puerto Francisco de Orellana, a.k.a. Coca, from which we drove slowly up the Rio Napo in a motorized mahogany dugout canoe, Pablo, our jungle guide, at the bow, Efraín, our *motorista,* at the stern. One of the three largest Ecuadorian tributaries to the Amazon, this river was where we were to spend the greater portion of our next four days. The tawny water moved swiftly, and foamy vegetable detritus, churned up by the powerful countercurrents, dotted the river's surface like tiny chocolate icebergs. "Amazonian Umbrellabirds!" Rosie sang out, pointing to six huge black birds with ludicrous shiny mops on top of their heads. "Yip yip!" The bird-watching had begun.

It was midnight in London by the watch on the Englishwoman Sandra's right wrist, five o'clock by the Ecuadorian time on her left when we returned to the Flotel Francisco de Orellana, named, like the port near which it was moored, for the Spaniard who "discovered" the Amazon. We had dropped our things there and taken the canoe to the Via Payamino, a nearly completed rocky highway between Coca and the capital city of Quito, in the Andes. For several hours, Rosie and John had shown us such birds as Maroon-tailed Parakeets, Purple-throated Fruitcrows, Orange-winged Amazons, and "amazingly enough," as Rosie said later, a Common Potoo, discovered by Deborah, the nurse: a long-bodied nocturnal bird, the potoo sleeps by day vertically stuck to a tree trunk the exact colors of its mottled feathers.

As the giant motel-boat cast off and began chugging slowly downriver, the late-afternoon sun cast a soft glow to the lurid brown water of the Napo; from the third-level sundeck on the stern, we could see the white peak of Sumaco surmounting a swath of silver and orange clouds more than thirty miles to the west. A few of us squealed with delight, and between swigs [illegible] beer we talked about the next day. W[illegible] were to leave the Flotel and trav[illegible] deeper into the rain forest, camping f[illegible] two nights in primitive shelters, the la[illegible] one without electricity. This portion [illegible] the trip had been listed as "optional[illegible] in VENT's brochure, which I mer[illegible] tioned to Allan, the writer and Ros[illegible] Ann's husband. "Ha! Don't tell *Ros[illegible]* it's optional," he said. Holly, the ed[illegible] tor, leaned under the metal decktable [illegible] umbrella. "You know what Rosie sai[illegible] on the way back to the Flotel? 'I war[illegible] to be the Pied Piper of the Rio Napo!' [illegible] I looked around at the rest of th[illegible] group. They were leaning against th[illegible] railing, joking and laughing, postpon[illegible] ing much-needed showers to revel i[illegible] day's end. Though Rosie must hav[illegible] wanted the power to lure Amazonia' [illegible] entire bird population into her vicinity [illegible] clearly it was all of us she and Joh[illegible] would charm into the forest as well.

Rosie has an otherworldly, yet no[illegible] ethereal air about her; the Oriente i[illegible] her element, and she makes even the[illegible] recording equipment slung over her[illegible] shoulder seem a natural part of the en-[illegible] vironment. When she smiles, you think[illegible] you can see a bird better for it. In spar-[illegible] kling contrast, John remains the intrepid[illegible] explorer, equally intense and assured[illegible] in the tropics, but ironical, jolly, and[illegible] willing to chat about *Timon of Athens* [illegible] if time permits. As their absolute sure-[illegible] ness that we couldn't be happier any-[illegible] where else slowly enveloped the entire[illegible] group, we were primed to seek the[illegible] heart of this exquisite alien landscape.

During the next two days, for every[illegible] difficult slog down a muddy forest trail[illegible] there was the attendant feeling of in-[illegible] vincibility in our rubber boots and[illegible] high humor. To compensate for the[illegible] mosquito that managed to penetrate[illegible] the shield of Cutter's was the sight of a[illegible] brigade of tiny leafcutter ants march-[illegible] ing by with their pale-green back-[illegible] packs of fractionized leaves. When a[illegible] bird in the forest would refuse to ap-[illegible] pear at the call of John and Rosie's[illegible] tape-recorded songs, a thick white[illegible] translucent orchid or a small gray hum-[illegible] mingbird's nest would make itself[illegible] known. And there were always the[illegible] birds that did come for Rosie and John:[illegible] from the sturdy platform in the canopy[illegible] of a two-hundred-foot-tall kapok tree,[illegible] John let out a shocking, loud burping[illegible] sound and *(Continued on page 38)*

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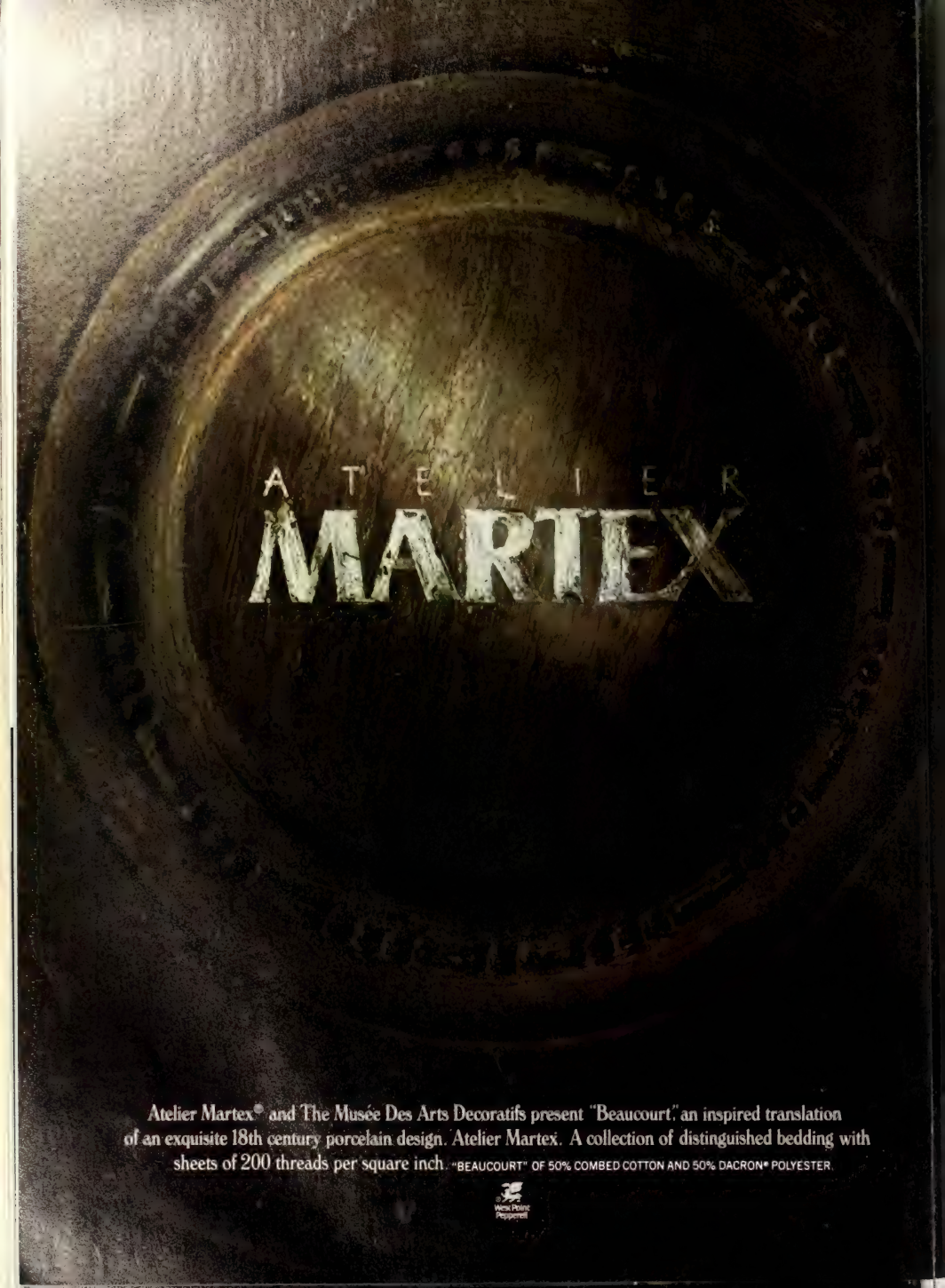
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(continued from page 38) home to the Giant Conebill, South America's rarest conebill. Above the spongy begonia-covered floor of the glade, the peeling bark of the polylepis, like rusty paper pinned to the trunks, made the miniature forest seem centuries old. We cut a trail through clumps of purple nightshade to a broad slope of tufty wheat-colored grass beyond, which was so thick we sprang along with our feet six inches off the ground. In another grove of polylepis, we lucked right upon the Giant Conebill. It was the friendliest reddish-brown bird I'd ever seen. Absurd as the idea is, I am sure that it was glad that we had found it and that it turned its saucy flips for our benefit as we stared with all our might through our binoculars. "Yip yip *yip!*" said John with his fist in the air, and a chorus joined in. Bounding back up the open mountain side, Allan toppled straight backwards into the cushiony fat grass.

The satisfying denouement of our trip was seeing ten species of gloriously plumed mountain tanagers, several Carunculated Caracaras, and two rare Andean Guans on the last-day return trip to Chiriboga Road. But the climax had come on Nono Road the night before, slowly building from the afternoon. Standing silently on the humped side of the road, we were shoulder-to-shoulder in a misty rain, watching the huge forest below us. A few yards away, John was elsewhere entirely, absorbed in seducing the melancholy Chestnut-crowned Antpitta. For twenty minutes man and bird sang a muted duet. Intermittently, we would turn to look for the reclusive Black-capped Solitaire that sang, astonishingly, the opening, trilling notes of "The Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairies." When the rain fell harder and we carefully put on our plastic ponchos, their gentle rustlings seemed sacrilegious. Later, the sun nearly down, it was hard to pull John away from the rare Toucan Barbet's taunting song. But we had to reach the Lyre-tailed Nightjar spot by 6:30. "At dawn and at dusk you need to be everywhere," he said softly, then turned with the rest of us to walk back to the bus.

We drove down the winding road, and Rosie said nothing while Barbara and Kathleen, the teen-ager, disputed the site of the stalled bulldozer on a flatbed truck that had forced the group to stop several nights before. "*Pare por favor,* Carlos," Rosie said to the driver at last, and we stepped quietly out of the bus. Bats zipped by our faces in the encroaching darkness, close enough to leave a breeze. A liquid "WHIP-wedoo, WHIP-wedoo" pierced the quiet. "*There it is,*" Rosie whispered, pointing to an arching low branch. John walked excitedly between us. "Do you see it? Janet? Doug? Do you see it, Alice?" he said quickly as he showed us where to point our binoculars. We did see it, but not clearly; it was perched sideways, the much-touted long tail draped behind on the branch. Nightjars of any species are seldom seen, being nocturnal and solitary; we were in this one's territory, and it was trying to court a female. Perhaps it knew it would have to do *something* to get rid of us. John shone his spotlight into the tree; suddenly the bird was in flight, straight over our heads. The musically curved tail feathers seemed to grow longer as they fluttered behind him, wiggling like a pair of airborn silken snakes, their white tips almost glinting as John followed it with the light. "That bird must think it's in Hollywood," whispered Bob, one of the doctors. For several minutes, to our rising and falling oohs and ahhs, it circled into the darkness, appeared again, flew back to the tree and back over the road, then divebombed us, slicing through the bats. We were completely undone.

We had a celebratory dinner of rare steak, red wine, and Pepperidge Farm cookies in the bus that night, right beside the nightjar spot. On the long drive back to Quito, the full moon lit up voluminous clouds over the volcanoes. Rosie and I sat together in the front of the bus, talking quietly while most of the group slept to Carlos's tape of sweet Peruvian folk songs. She told me about seeing such things as the moonlight mating dances of the Andean Cock-of-the Rock, and she mentioned that a college advisor had told her she would be foolhardy to think she could make a living doing what she most loved. As an impressionable freshman, she had believed this, and years went by before she was able to watch birds again all the time. "Isn't that incredible?" Rosie said, and laughed and laughed as the trees by the road fell away into the darkness. □

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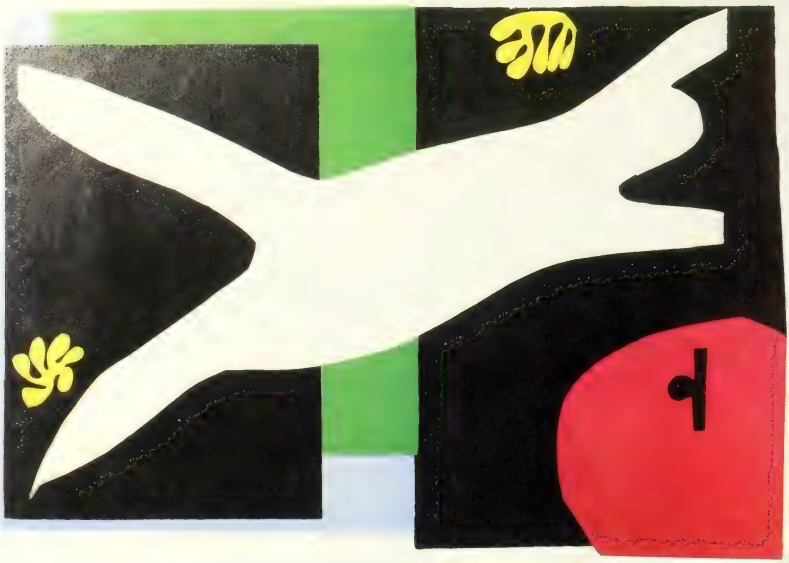
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JAZZ
By Henri Matisse
George Braziller, 176 pp., $90

An outsized facsimile of 35 pages of brilliantly colored cutouts and 80 handwritten pages by Matisse first published in an edition of 250 in 1947 by Tériade. That edition now sells at auction for as much as $40,000. On the book, Matisse said: "These images, with their lively and violent tones, derive from crystallizations of memories, circuses, folktales, and voyages."

THE ART OF THE OLD SOUTH: PAINTINGS, SCULPTURE, ARCHITECTURE & THE PRODUCTS OF CRAFTSMEN, 1560–1860
By Jessie Poesch
Alfred A. Knopf, 390 pp., $50

The history of the Southern arts when they flourished, from 1560 to 1860, is chronologically traced in this book. Full of information about artists and patrons alike, the book gives the reader a cultural and historical overview of Southern life until the Civil War.

NOMADS OF NIGER
Photographs by Carol Beckwith
Text by Marion Van Offelen
Harry N. Abrams, 224 pp., $45

Leni Riefenstahl, eat your heart out. The tall, slender, fine-boned Wodaabe herdsmen of Niger, among the last nomads, ingeniously but not without much hardship make a living off the vast, dry plateau that lies between the Sahara Desert and the grasslands to the south. Photographs of the tribesmen on their camels, or the most beautiful young men, in their best native dress, jewelry, and make-up before the *geerewol* dance, accompany a text that follows the life of these people through one herdsman, Mokao, and his family. And we are never bored.

ARCHITECTURE AND COMMUNITY: BUILDING IN THE ISLAMIC WORLD TODAY
Edited by Renata Holod with Darl Rastorfer
Aperture/Viking Press, 256 pp., $40

An examination of the validity of Islamic architecture for the world today, this book discusses, with essays by architects, sociologists, historians, and philosophers, the fifteen projects—some newly built, others restorations—which won the first Aga Khan Award for Architecture. Among the vivid color photographs are futuristic water towers in Kuwait, a medical center in Mali, Sidi Bou Said, Tunisia, and private homes near the port of Alexandria and in Bodrum, Turkey. *(Continued on page 44)*

FROM JAZZ

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VERSAILLES: A GARDEN
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Photographs by Jacques Dubois
Introduction by Gérald Van der Kemp
The Vendome Press, 224 pp., $85

In this limited edition of 1,500 beautifully printed black-and-white and color photographs of sweeping vistas of the gardens, isolated views of the statues and fountains, and the outside of the palace itself hauntingly evoke Versailles in images one wants to look at again and again.

PARIS
By John Russell
Foreword by Rosamond Bernier
Harry N. Abrams, 350 pp., $45

Illustrated with well-chosen and unusual photographs and paintings, this updated version of the earlier unillustrated book by Russell goes through Paris neighborhood by neighborhood, devoting whole chapters to the Louvre, The Comédie-Française, The Palais Royal, and Haussmann. A fascinating text on a subject we tend to feel is hackneyed.

HISTORY OF THE INTERIOR
By Charles McCorquodale
The Vendome Press, 224 pp., $40

Densely packed with information, this book is a mini-encyclopedia of interior decoration from ancient Greece to the present. Well-chosen drawings, paintings, and photographs document scholarly but articulate discussions of the histories and evolutions of styles. McCorquodale includes such amazing great rooms as the madly encrusted Chinese Room in Palazzo Reale, Turin; the Ruin Room of S. Trinità dei Monti, Rome; and the excessive Porzellankabinett, Schloss Herrenchiemsee, Bavaria. Mario Praz, roll over.

KASHMIR: GARDEN OF THE HIMALAYAS
By Raghubir Singh
Thames and Hudson, 112 pp., $35

A short, lyrical introduction hardly prepares you for the exotic photographs of everyday life in the Vale of Kashmir. Yellow mustard and lavender-colored saffron fields, almond orchards, flowering pear and peach trees, and towering mountains half hidden by dark, stormy clouds lie alongside lakes with floating gardens and *dunga* houseboats. Boys hawking enormous pink lotus blossoms in the street, a skull-cap maker in his shop, a wedding, a saffron merchant in his home, pilgrims wending their way through the mountains, textile merchants with their goods, girls at papier-mâché school have a beauty all their own. The clothing and the buildings are always in Matisse-like hues of blue, rose, yellow, and green.



GARDENS OF FRANCE
By Anita Pereire and Gabrielle van Zuylen
Harmony Books, 224 pp., $40

The best in garden voyeurism. Anit Pereire and Gabrielle van Zuylen tak us behind high walls and towerin hedges into the cool oases of 32 o France's most beautiful private gar dens. We are guided through the his tory of French garden design from th early Renaissance to the present a their graceful and interesting text ac companies Robert César's magica photographs of well-tended and elab orate estates from Normandy to Ca d'Antibes.

MAN WITH CAMERA: PHOTOGRAPHS FROM SEVEN DECADES
By Felix H. Man
Secker & Warburg, London, 280 pp., £17.50

Photojournalism at its best with an interesting text. Felix Man was always there: German soldiers wearing their *Pickelhaube* on the Alsatian front in 1915, a Max Reinhardt first night at Berlin's *Deutches Theater* in 1929, brass bands and weightlifting in the Munich beercellars, Mussolini on his daily morning ride, Matisse at home, G.B. Shaw on the set of *Pygmalion* in 1937, Toscanini at Bayreuth in 1930, and many more.

MONET
By Robert Gordon and Andrew Forge
Harry N. Abrams, 304 pp., $67.50

This outsized biography of Monet, also a study of his art, is apparently the first to be published in over twenty years. It contains many photographs of his home and family, a vast number of color reproductions of his work, many never reproduced in color. Written by a former dean of the school of art at Yale, the text is scholarly and readable.

THE MAKING OF A GARDEN—AN ANTHOLOGY OF GERTRUDE JEKYLL
Antique Collectors' Club, 160 pp., $29.50

The latest book in the collection of handsome Jekyll reprints. This one includes excerpts from many of her books, lavishly illustrated with photographs and the work of Edwardian painter George Samuel Elgood. The use of color *(Continued on page 46)*

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(Continued from page 44) and the mak ing of a garden through the seasons ar some of the topics addressed.

THE TRAVELS OF SIR JOHN MANDEVILLE: A MANUSCRIPT IN THE BRITISH LIBRARY
Introduction and commentaries on the plates by Joseph Krása
George Braziller, 132 pp., $45

Thought to be the most widely read "travel book" of the Middle Ages, this unusual, slender, leather-bound facsimile edition of the medieval manuscript of an author whose real identity



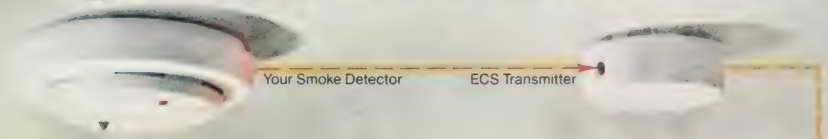
FROM THE TRAVELS OF SIR JOHN MANDEVILLE

is unknown is a fourteenth-century fictional account of travels to the East, mostly borrowed from earlier texts. A meeting with Pope John XXII, astronomy on Mount Athos, hunting stag with leopards in Cyprus, a jousting tournament in Constantinople, an account of the relics and history of the true cross are illustrated in pale green with touches of blue and gold by an unknown Czech artist, in the so-called "Beautiful Style" of Germany and Bohemia. It is thought the illustrations were made for a fifteenth-century Czech bibliophile who probably owned a Czech translation of the text.

THE ENGLISHWOMAN'S KITCHEN
Edited by Tamasin Day-Lewis
Photographs by Tony Heathcote
Chatto & Windus/
Merrimack Publishers' Circle, 153 pp., $22.95

Photographed in their kitchens, thirty well-known English professional and amateur cooks *(Continued on page 48)*

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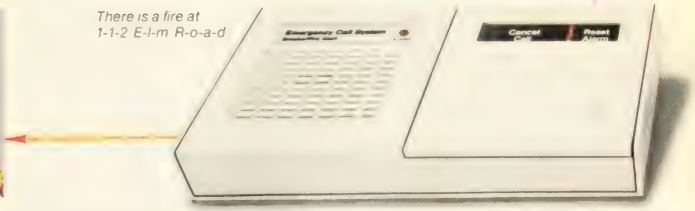
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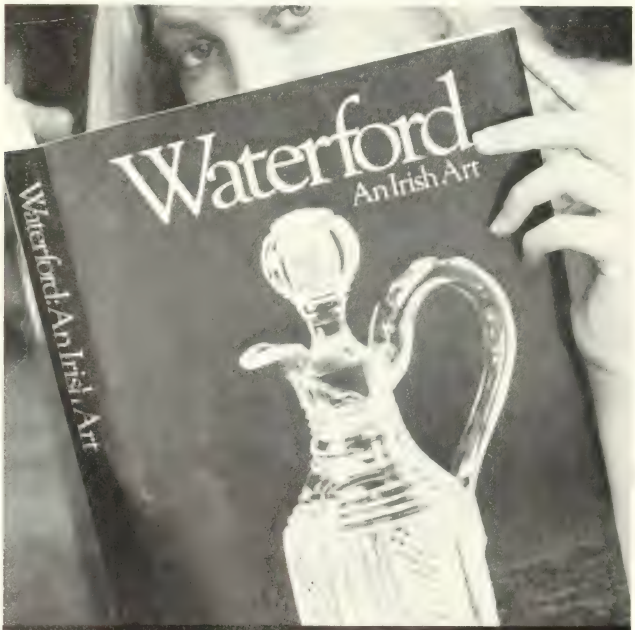
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BOOKS

(Continued from page 46) talk abou their cooking, their kitchens, and offe several recipes. Setting the tone, ele gant black-and-white drawings of thei houses—not unlike those in Simon Beck's *Simca's Cuisine*—head th chapters. The Countess of Lichfield of fers "A Shooting Picnic," Jane Grig son "A Summer Lunch," Pamela Har lech "Preserves and Pickles," and th Countess of Chichester "Town and Country Entertaining."

THE ART OF THE REAL: NINE AMERICAN FIGURATIVE PAINTERS
Edited by Mark Strand
Foreword by Robert Hughes
Clarkson N. Potter, 240 pp., $45

In this book William Bailey, Alex Katz, Philip Pearlstein, and Wayne Thiebaud are among those figurative painters who talk about their life and work. Art critic Robert Hughes and poet Mark Strand provide an introduction and tell why they're interested in the "art of the real."

STATELY GARDENS OF BRITAIN
By Thomas Hinde
Photographs by Dmitri Kasterine
Ebury Press, 192 pp., $29.95

Perhaps because he's the author of many novels, Englishman Thomas Hinde has written unusually lively and interesting essays about 24 of Britain's most beautiful stately gardens—Stourhead, Chatsworth, Hidcote, Sezincote, Arley Hall among them—and captured the spirit of their passionate gardening owners. Glorious pictures of 'Iceberg' roses, giant topiary, lavender terrace-beds, the oldest herbaceous border, and a thirteen-acre parterre make this one of the best gardening books around.

ROBERT SMYTHSON AND THE ELIZABETHAN COUNTRY HOUSE
By Mark Girouard
Yale University Press, 336 pp., $35

Though this book first came out in 1966, it has long been out of print and many additions have been made. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries come to life in discussions of pageantry and chivalry and such early amusements as the mock attack of cardboard sham castles occupied by ladies intended to symbolically evoke the medieval spirit. With vivid history as background and many photographs, prints, and architectural drawings, Girouard writes about the Elizabethan and (Continued on page 51)

Continued from page 48) Jacobean ouses connected with Robert Smyth- on, his architect son and grandson— ongleat, Wollaton, Hardwick, Woot- on, and Bolsover, among others—and neir often-eccentric patrons.

THE ENGLISH COUNTRYWOMAN:
HER LIFE IN FARMHOUSE
AND FIELD FROM TUDOR TIMES
TO THE VICTORIAN AGE
By G.E. and K.R. Fussell
Salem House/
Merrimack Publishers' Circle,
221 pp., $17.95

Black-and-white prints illustrate this ntimately detailed account of the du- ies and pleasures of the English wom- an's daily life. A lively and popular overview—nothing too challenging or ground-breaking—this reissued book ooks at the gentry, farmer, and servant alike and puts it all in perspective.

MASTERS OF EARLY
TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY
Edited by Rainer Fabian and
Hans-Christian Adam
The Vendome Press, 352 pp., $50

Egypt, Greenland, Japan, Brazil, In- dia, China, and the American West are seen through the lens of famous nine- teenth-century photographers in this



FROM "THE MASTERS OF EARLY TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY"

collection chosen by Rainer Fabian and Hans-Christian Adam. Every chapter of the short text is diverting and full of information. John Thom- son's pictures of Peking, Marc Ferrez's of Rio and the Amazon, and Francis Frith's of the Nile and its temples, alone, make it a book that one might care to have. □



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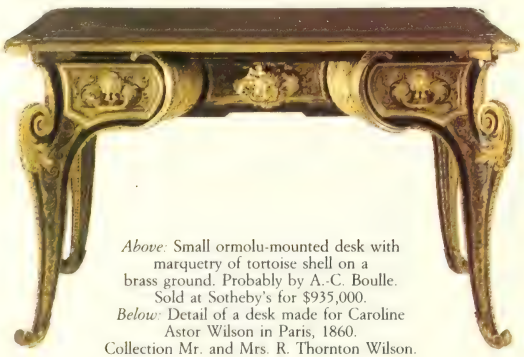
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COLOR IT BLACK

Like Halley's Comet, black furniture swings into view every eighty years

By Nancy Richardson

Even in a moment when some of the most beautiful rooms are turning up a very romantic white, it is plain that the twentieth century's love of white furniture and backgrounds is about to be tempered with something else, something quite opposite, something rich, dark, and elaborate. The surprise is that the desire to switch from light backgrounds and furniture to dark is a predictable one that has gripped fashions in decoration every eighty or a hundred years since the seventeenth century.



Above: Small ormolu-mounted desk with marquetry of tortoise shell on a brass ground. Probably by A.-C. Boulle. Sold at Sotheby's for $935,000.
Below: Detail of a desk made for Caroline Astor Wilson in Paris, 1860. Collection Mr. and Mrs. R. Thornton Wilson.



Perhaps the most famous of all black furniture is that made for Louis XIV by André-Charles Boulle. It has endured the same successes and subsequent eclipses as has dark furniture and backgrounds in general when the mood for a light color scheme predominates. Jean Feray, Inspecteur Principal des Monuments Historiques in Paris, explains that as the Sun King got older he developed a taste for sumptuous ebony furniture inlaid with tortoise shell, brass, or pewter—the sort of things that had been made in Antwerp for a long time. He liked huge solemn architectural cabinets and cupboards and the bronzes that went well with them. "When Louis XV succeeded he was an orphan, the last survivor in his family. He associated Boulle furniture with years of mourning and so sent it all away to the royal storerooms. Louis XV loved color; he had whole dinner sets of turquoise, silks of apple green, and rose pompadour with golden threads woven in to heighten the design. He liked red and blue lacquer furniture. At the court the ladies wore diamonds during the day. But eventually certain people were longing to go back to the grand style. In 1758 a great amateur and collector, Lalive de Jully, ordered a large piece of Neoclassical furniture in ebony with huge laurel swags in gilt bronze. And everybody began to bring out the Boulle furniture again. The Duc de Richelieu collected every Oriental silk, ceramic, and object available and commissioned chinoiserie fantasies. His collection was installed in a room paneled in dark lacquer, trimmed with gold."

For the most part, the late eighteenth century saw black lacquer and restored Boulle furniture used in rooms where the paneling was light—and sometimes even white and gold. But the nineteenth century was crazy about black mostly set against rich dark backgrounds. The Prince Regent loved black and every other color of lacquer. His friend the third Marquess of Hertford shared a taste for Boulle and Oriental lacquer furnishings and often bought examples for himself as well as the Regent. Today the royal collection includes some handsome black furniture. Similar pieces can be seen at the Wallace Collection in London, which is where the Hertford collections are on view. Even the Duke of Wellington was given quantities of Boulle furniture, which is now at Stratfield Saye. Later in the century, the English Rothschilds installed Richelieu's lacquer paneling at Waddesdon, where it can still be seen, and Napoleon III was busy cutting Boulle cabinets in two: the bottom to become a console, the top a cabinet that received a new base.

Black furniture made by André-Charles Boulle was initially a continuation of the spirit and silhouette of furniture made at the time of Louis XIII, which reflected the overwhelming influence of the Italian Renaissance in France. The seventeenth century loved marquetry furniture, and Boulle's genius for inlaying metal and tortoise shell in complicated swirling designs on an ebony surface brought the art of marquetry to its highest expression. The handsomeness of the resulting "pat- *(Continued on page 54)*

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colour bursts forth
on lips on nails
in shades that conquer
Marvelous Dior
SAKS FIFTH AVENUE



(Continued from page 52) terned" ebony surface combined with beautifully sculptured giltbronze mounts produced furniture considered the ultimate of its era.

The seventeenth-century love of dark furniture, however, was not just confined to Boulle or his predecessors. Much of Europe and also England had developed a taste for the black lacquer chests, boxes, and writing desks brought back from the Orient in numbers that did not begin to satisfy the demand for them. These chests were often set on elaborate carved giltwood bases made by European cabinetmakers and topped with a collection of Oriental porcelain pots and jars—a practice still in fashion. But for the most part seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europeans who were infatuated by the quality of Chinese and Japanese lacquer were not equally infatuated with Oriental cabinetwork and bronze mounts. To get the best of both worlds, certain Dutch cabinetmakers imported Oriental craftsmen to do the lacquer work in Europe. For a time the East India Company sent out English furniture as ballast to the Far East to have it lacquered there and returned. Neither expedient proved satisfactory. The secret of Oriental lacquer was a resin that came from the sumac tree and which had to be used relatively quickly because it hardened into a dark, hard, and lustrous surface. It was too perishable for export. And the Europeans, using less elaborate methods for the application of their own lacquer, would rarely build up a quarter of an inch of surface the way the Orientals did with successive thin, individually burnished layers. In a search for substitutes it was found that Oriental furniture made for the local market did not appeal to Western taste. By the mid-eighteenth century the French and the English resorted to some fairly odd practices in order to get the look they wanted. Twelve-panel Coromandel screens, where the design was incised into the lacquer and dusted here and there with gold, continued to be imported to Europe and used intact. But other screens and chests were broken up for use as veneer and panels on drawer tops and sides of European furniture. These bits of Oriental lacquer were considered so valuable in the mid-eighteenth century—as they are again today—that gold boxes inlaid with tiny lacquer scenes would fetch more than an all-gold box. The application of panels of lacquer—some of them were heated and then bent to conform to a bombé front—usually made a comedy of the design from which they were taken. Contemporary observers commented on boars being chased in mid-ocean, fishermen angling for dolphins in a forest, and elephants that appeared to balance on a butterfly. The surreal use of these fragments cleared the way for Europeans to devise Oriental fantasies of their own without having to be literal. Thomas Chippendale made both sorts of furniture for his famous commission at Harewood House.



Late-nineteenth-century japanned chair inlaid with mother-of-pearl.

Black finishes done in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by either amateurs or professionals are called japanning. Most japanning consisted of several coats of black paint and varnish and it was widely applied to each successive style of nineteenth-century furniture from the English Regency to Victorian. Amateur japanners existed in England even in the mid-eighteenth century and bought such books as *The Ladies Amusement or Whole Art of Japanning Made Easy* from which they could copy chinoiserie designs in gold onto furniture they had painted black. Amateurs achieved the gold, the black, and the charm, but no European ever seemed able to make a black lacquer as lustrous as that of the Chinese and Japanese.

The black aspect of black furniture is only part of the story of its appeal. What most people love about black furniture, perhaps unconsciously, is that it is invariably used with gold. "People buy black furniture now because of its impact in a room," says Trevor Potts, a New York dealer in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century English furniture. With black furniture the great appeal is in the gold, not just the shininess of the black. For most black lacquer furniture isn't really dark, it's light, both because it reflects light and because it becomes a background on which to use gold or other colors."

When either Boulle or black lacquer furniture was first made, both the gold mounts and the black itself were shiny, hard, and reflective. It may even have looked noisy and nouveau riche, which is how some people respond today when this sort of furniture is restored to its glossy original state. Since restraint is something the twentieth century has always admired in furniture, it is not surprising that there is a group that favors the look of unrestored black furniture. Decorators such as Nancy Lancaster and John Fowler were known to seek out faded pieces of Boulle or slightly starved-looking Queen Anne secretaries simply because they liked the dour, sober majesty they exuded. Others delight in twelve-panel screens where both the gold and the black haven't been touched since they arrived in Europe two hundred years ago—perhaps an affectation involving how long the thing had been in the family.

The current vogue for black seems to signal not only a swing away from white but a swing away from elegance as simplicity. Black furniture has never been associated with bare, clean rooms. The furniture Boulle made for Louis XIV and what went with it set a standard forever for baroque magnificence. The more you look, the more it appears that black used in decoration as a background color or for furniture was always a signal for darker and for more obviously rich interiors.

By the second half of the nineteenth century Queen Victoria happily indulged her husband's love of black furniture. It is easy*(Continued on page 56)*

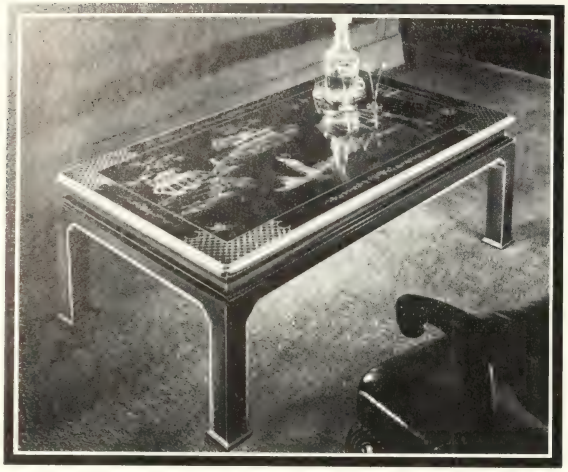


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Henredon



(Continued from page 54) to see that by then the hankering after it had become an accepted royal pastime.It was also desirable to those who loved furniture with a royal provenance. The Rothschilds collected black furniture certainly for its associations, but also because it looked right in the rich crowded backdrops that were proliferating in Rothschild households all over Europe after the middle of the century. The black furniture most accessible today, however, is decorative nineteenth-century furniture painted black, trimmed in gold and sometimes given a design of inlaid mother-of-pearl. Much of this sort of furniture is made of wood covered with layers of papier mâché to achieve a whimsical silhouette. Much of it was originally japanned and decorated by amateurs, and it appeals to a similar amateur today who has begun to use chintzes and rugs with black backgrounds instead of white.

The marketplace today offers black furniture of all sorts. Trevor Potts sells quantities of nineteenth-century black furniture that ranges from tole trays and tea caddies to Regency chairs and Victorian papier mâché. Christie's East will sell a rare papier mâché bed—normally a bed was something too big to pull off in papier mâché—in a December 13 sale of Victorian furniture. Schlesch/Garza in New York have a handsome Chinese export cabinet. In September Doyle's auction room in New York made $42,000 for a pair of Louis XVI–style commodes similar to some by Weisweiler that had belonged to Queen Mary. The really good black furniture has also been appearing on the market.

A flattop desk "attributed" to Boulle—as most authentic Boulle furniture must be described since he never signed his furniture—appeared on the market last spring at one of Thierry Millerand's French furniture sales at Sotheby's in New York. It was positioned like a small, glimmering, and powerful prize bull at the preview in early May. The ebony and tortoise marquetry had a dignified shabby look and the mounts seemed like ancient gold. When the day of the sale came, several museums, Hubert de Givenchy, and Mrs. Seward Johnson all wanted the desk. Mrs. Johnson, an American col-*(Continued on page 58)*



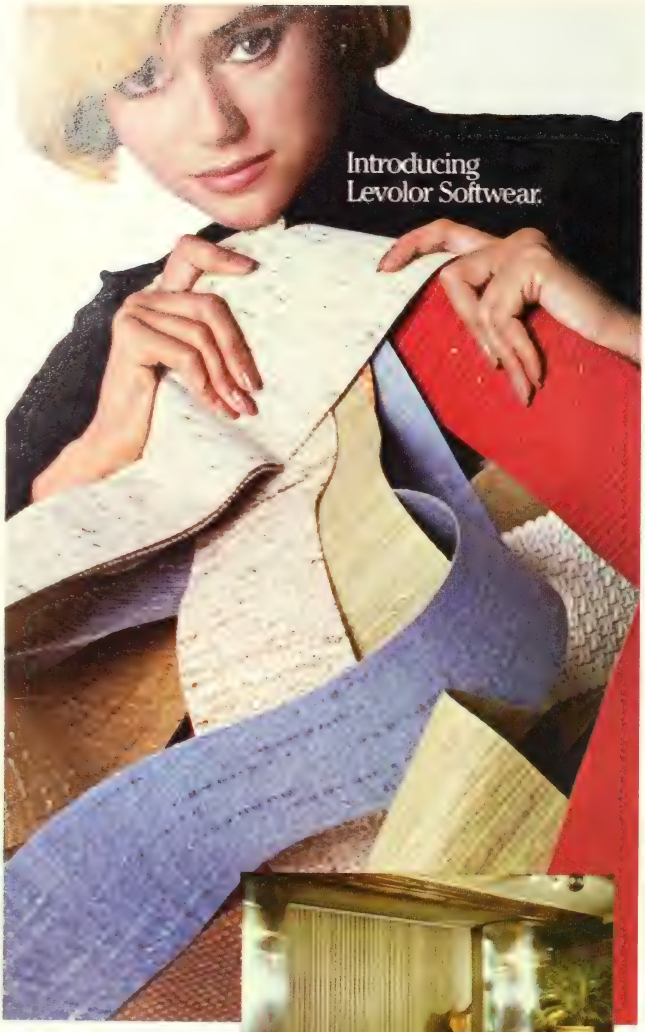
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(Continued from page 56) lector o French decorative arts, "won" it fo $995,000. Then eight weeks later ir London Mrs. Johnson left the antique world gasping as she paid a millior pounds for another piece of black furniture—this time a fallfront desk o black lacquer and gilt bronze made for Louis XVI, probably by Adam Weisweiler. The gold mounts at the corners of the cabinet were like Neoclassical statues—the Oriental black lacquer panels veneered onto a carcass made in France. This was the "filing cabinet" the king took with him when he left Versailles to enter house arrest in the Tuileries. Several important black pieces came up at auction in October. There was a minuscule Boulle writing table that was virtually all gilt bronze. The estimates showed that the market was interested in lacquer furniture whether it was Oriental or European. But the pieces with Oriental lacquer were the most expensive.

Black furniture not only makes a collection but it will make any room that it enters. What is so remarkable is that a similar punch comes off less expensive black furniture. While it may not put a collection on the map, it can certainly anchor a room. This is especially true of modest nineteenth-century black. Since the twentieth century's desire to paint everything white, pull up the shades, and turn on the lights was prompted by the excessive heaviness and darkness of late-nineteenth-century taste, it may seem heretical to say how really marvelous in particular the nineteenth-century use of black was. Manet's portraits of men and women in black—seated on dark furniture and set against voluptuous interiors—remind us not only of nineteenth-century rooms but of the Spanish seventeenth-century interiors Manet saw when he studied Velázquez's paintings. Did he look at Rembrandt portraits, too, with their somberly dressed sitters? In both Dutch and Spanish seventeenth-century rooms black clothes went with furnishings made of ebony or other dark woods and walls with a Córdoba leather highlighted in gold. Across the centuries a pattern appears—though not as a rigid repeat—seventeenth century dark, eighteenth century light, nineteenth century dark, twentieth century light—until now. □

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WAXING STRANGE

The eerie beauty of a centuries-old art

By J. Patrice Marandel

"The courts of kings wouldn't be complete without dwarfs and jesters. It is not only beautiful things that give pleasure, the bizarre can give pleasure also." These words belong to the eloquent, if somewhat apologetic, defense of wax collecting in the late Mario Praz's autobiography, *The House of Life*. The author-cum-collector could easily have added that the courts of kings would not have been complete without wax sculptures, for this peculiar and fascinating genre, which by the early nineteenth century became a staple of bourgeois taste, had been a courtly art for centuries.

Though the origins of wax sculpture are elusive, its longstanding history is attested not only in medieval documents, but even in Greek and Roman sources. Lysistratus, a sculptor active at the time of Alexander the Great, was, according to his contemporaries, famous for large wax statues that rivaled in beauty the highest achievements of artists using other, more solid, materials. The trompe-l'oeil qualities of wax sculpture were also well-known at the court of Roman emperor Heliogabalus, who reveled in serving colored wax fruits to his courtiers while he himself ate the real ones with gluttony (which brings to mind the surprise of Western tourists in Japan at their first encounter with a plate of wax sushi in lieu of a restaurant menu). These early attempts at hyper-realist sculpture—known today only through descriptions—were probably rather coarse and could hardly be compared with the small, refined, and often preciously framed portraits and genre scenes that Mario Praz collected.

Above: Cetto's view of Dresden was one of four minutely executed cities.

My own fascination with wax sculptures goes back to my first visit as a child in Paris to the Musée Grévin—the local version of London's Madame Tussaud Museum—where the likes of Jean Cocteau and Pius XII, anonymous vagabonds, and past presidents of the French Republic mingled, upsetting both time and social conventions. Particularly frightful to me was a figure of a man sitting on a bench, reading a newspaper. My mother, deadpan, suggested I ask him the time. His chilling silence *(Continued on page 62)*

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(Continued from page 62) perhaps more minor ones can occasionally appear at auctions or even estate sales. Wax collecting was more fashionable in the nineteenth century than in our own, and waxes can thus be found when collections assembled at that time are being dispersed.

Collecting is, however, the pursuit of the impossible, which for the wax aficionado would be the acquisition of a wax composition by Gaetano Zummo, or Zumbo. Born around 1656 in Sicily, Zumbo rapidly became the most sophisticated artist working in wax. His output must have been limited and his surviving works are kept for the most part at the Museo Nazionale, Florence, and the Victoria & Albert Museum. They reveal an artist who brought a "popular" medium to the level of the highest art. Zumbo, who was active in Florence, is famous for a small body of works, *reductiones ad absurdum* of allegorical tableaux, such as *The Triumph of Time* or *The Plague,* both of which depict with hair-raising accuracy the decaying of bodies after death.

What constitutes the appeal of these horrific tableaux is perhaps best left to the psychoanalyst to explain. Zumbo reflects eloquently the Baroque fascination with death, its image and its meaning. He was a contemporary of the French philosopher Pascal, whose vision of the world and rules for action were guided by the omnipresent thought of death and uncertainty beyond the grave. At a time when the arts were particularly flourishing, luxury among the ruling classes at a peak, and the minds of the people rooted in Christian thought, it was the preachers' and philosophers' duty to remind the rich and the powerful of the ephemeral quality of their possessions. Artists often echoed the dire projections put down by Pascal in his *Pensées,* or brilliantly expressed by Bossuet, the eloquent preacher to whom Louis XIV had to listen but whose advice he seldom followed. *Vanitas* pictures or sculptures, as they were called, were an ambiguous concession on the part of the church to the aristocratic taste for beautiful and expensive objects. At the same time the rich sinner was supposed to repent and forfeit all worldly pleasures, he was encouraged to do so by looking at appropriate works of art that he had commissioned at great expense. Zumbo's tableaux are typical examples of this cultivated taste for the macabre. The naturalism of his creations reinforces the power of the message while the very material he uses, the fragile wax—destroyable by a fire not nearly as strong as the flames of Hell—becomes an allegory of the transience of all things. Not everyone, even among those devoted to wax sculptures, responds positively to them. D.R. Reilly, who in 1963 published one of the rare books on the subject of wax portraits, found Zumbo's creations "unpleasant." To the person interested in "bizarre" sculptures, however, their reduced scale and hyperrealism account for the morbid spell they cast. Speaking of spells is indeed to the point: wax figurines were often used in witchcraft practices, as voodoo dolls are today. Ortega y Gasset, quoted by Mario Praz, summarized one's ambivalent attitude toward wax sculptures: " '. . . waxen figures frustrate any attempt to adopt a clear, coherent attitude toward them. . . . They do not allow themselves to be reduced to mere objects. As we look at them, *(Continued on page 66)*

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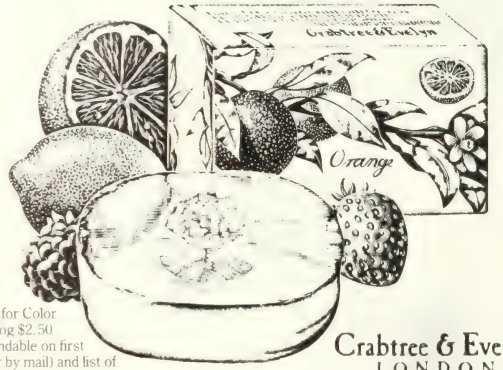
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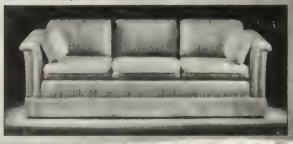
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(Continued from page 64) suddenly there comes a doubt: Is it not perhaps they who are looking at us?' "

Not all wax sculptures are meant to plunge the spectator into the abyss of meditation over life and death. In a lighter mode, collectors might be attracted to the delightful creations of a pleasing artist such as Giovanni Francesco Pieri, active in Naples at the court of the Bourbon kings. Less prone than the Florentine to metaphysical speculations and more inclined toward earthly pleasures, the Neapolitan sovereigns delighted in Pieri's realistic and colorful renditions of subjects from everyday life: a classroom, a lady at her toilette, peasants or fishermen at work, a lady being hoisted off a boat on the Neapolitan seashore. No matter how picturesque and remote from official courtly art they seem to us today, Pieri's compositions—which can be seen at the Museo di Capodimonte in Naples or at the Wallace Collection in London—were originally intended exclusively for the delectation of the King and of his entourage.

A contemporary of Pieri's, the Bavarian-born Nicolas Engelbert Cetto, also worked in wax for the court at Naples. His elaborate wax reliefs are worlds apart from Pieri's genre scenes. The minute execution of four recently rediscovered views of Dresden, Naples, Jerusalem, and Madrid recalls the exacting art of the German boxwood carvers of the Renaissance. Cetto's is official art at its best.

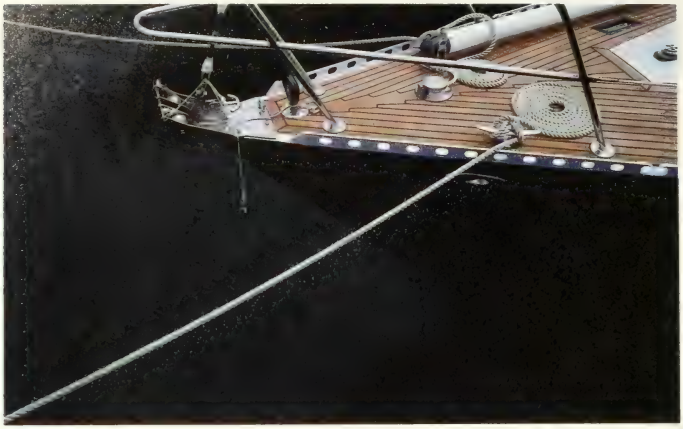
This is not to say that the art of wax sculpture died with the *ancien régime*. Numerous examples could be found to witness the vitality of this art form in the nineteenth century—from the Biedermeier to the Victorian period. Yet, no matter how charming or seductive these sweet and nostalgic pieces may be, they lack for the real lover of waxes the thrill earlier pieces would never fail to evoke in him. Curiously, it is in certain offbeat aspects of American sculpture in the sixties that the inherent qualities of this extraordinary medium have found a renewal of expression, particularly in the reduced, boxed-in, erotic tableaux of Robert Graham or Paul Thek's stupefying renditions in wax of sliced flesh. I have looked at these works with horror, fascination, or voyeuristic instincts, but never with indifference. □

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WHY WAIT?



PIER 66

An Englishman takes a good look at the androgynous caste of Fort Lauderdale's stinkpot armada

By Jonathan Raban

Boats are loaded down with cargoes of subliminal meaning and association. At every dockside, people with time on their hands are drawn to stare wistfully at their painted hulls, their masts and wheelhouses. The eyes of the bystanders have a meditative glaze. For in a secular society, notably short of reminders of transcendence, the tethered boats exert much the same sort of hold on the imagination as religious icons. Their bows point to a world beyond the immediate temporal one of telephones and tax men. They tantalize the landlubber with the prospect of liberation on a scale that he can only guess at; the freedom of ocean. They promise solitude, self-sufficiency, danger—a life outside society, in the blue.

I've stood dreaming at the end of too many piers for my own good. I carried the thing to extremes, and found myself the owner of a Registered British Ship, wooden-built, just thirty feet long, transformed from a previous existence as a Scottish fishing boat. It's the nearest I shall ever get to having a private empire. I am its captain, crew, and—usually—its sole passenger. Afloat at sea, it's all I want of house and garden. I don't sail under a flag. If I did have an ensign, it would, I suppose, be a small embroidered fish, the sign of the id abroad.

I heard Fort Lauderdale talked-up as "the boating capital of the world," an irresistible title to someone of my sectarian beliefs. Knowing, a touch ruefully, the extent to which my own fantasy life had been made concrete in a boat, I went to Florida to find out how other people had fleshed out their dreams down at the marina.

Like most of the great money-spinners on the Gold Coast, Pier 66 Marina was a mangrove swamp until the fifties. Now it is a small floating city, its boulevards and alleyways marked off by a labyrinth of pontoons. The white boats, tied up hull to hull, are terraced like ziggurats, with sundecks, flying bridges, and tarpon towers. Their radio antennas glint against the sky. Their high sculpted bows are elaborately flared, every one cast in the expression of a snarl. Raked windows of smoked glass stand in for narrowed eyes: they look like tough customers, these expensive products of the American boat-building industry, the Hatterases, Bertrams, Browards, Chris-Crafts.

Top: At Pier 66, a boat closer to the author's heart than most of what he saw.

They were not designed to be seen like this, lying docile in a marina. I had first set eyes on them in the ads of magazines like *Boating,* where every vessel that is put up for sale is shown in photographs whose technique owes a lot to old-fashioned pornography. In the pictures, the boats are always alone in an unbroken swath of open sea. They are heading fast from the bottom left-hand corner to the top right, moving in a furious bustle of white spray around their sterns. Their bows are clean out of the water, pointing skyward. Their twin diesels are dug hard into the sea. They leave behind them a long smooth vee of wake, like a *(Continued on page 72)*



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(Continued from page 70) bulging muscle. What the pictures announce, with brute clarity, is that such handsome studs have got *cojones*.

So at Pier 66 these audacious symbols of virility looked pretty tame to me. Herded together in line, roped and chained, linked to the shore by rubber umbilicals supplying fresh water, telephone service, and cable television, they had been robbed of their thunder. The manager of the marina drove me round his territory in an electric golf buggy. The pontoons were deserted, except for a handful of professional captains doing caretaking jobs on the boats of their absent owners. The boats themselves slid past us in monotonous procession. The materials from which they were made did vary—fiberglass, welded aluminum, steel, ferroconcrete—but their lines were identical. They all had predatory bows, built far higher and sharper than mere seaworthiness could justify. Their steep superstructures, with deck piled on top of deck, were arrogant pieces of co fectionery, as boastful in their way the façades of the cotton planter mansions in Mississippi and Louisian I wondered who their owners were.

"We've come to see a pattern in over the years," the manager sai "When we first started, it was people the automobile industry. Ten yea ago, it was the property business. No it's electronics. Guys in their forti and fifties—and over."

Certainly one would have to be rich man to afford to keep a moto yacht at Pier 66. A new Bertram Hatteras of average size (say 58 fe long) would cost well over half a mi lion dollars. Just keeping it tied to pontoon for a year costs $14,000. Basi maintenance might be aroun $20,000. Then a captain has to be em ployed to keep the boat in working or der: his salary would be roughl $25,000 a year. It is a fine thing, in Min neapolis or Chicago, to be able to casu ally drop the words, "my boat down a Lauderdale." It is a very expensive phrase to utter. At the most modest es timate, I reckon that each word cost about $22,000 per annum.

For in the case of a lot of the boats in the marina, those words are the only apparent reward of ownership. According to the manager, many never leave the dock. Some make the occasional cautious picnic trip down the Intracoastal Waterway to Key Biscayne. A small minority go out regularly on cruises to the Bahamas and beyond. A number are left quite unvisited by their owners in the northern states—pure, unimpeachable symbols, bereft of any practical function at all.

I found one disconsolate captain aboard a Hatteras. He hadn't seen his owners for nearly two years. They were up in Ohio, and he was still waiting for the telephone to ring. When the boat had first been bought, he'd been kept busy almost every weekend, sailing the family and their business friends across to Nassau and down to Key West. Then, "the recession hit, I guess. They just lost interest." Now all he did was tinker with the air-conditioning unit and the ice machine. Once every three weeks or so, he ran the boat around the perimeter of *(Continued on page 74)*

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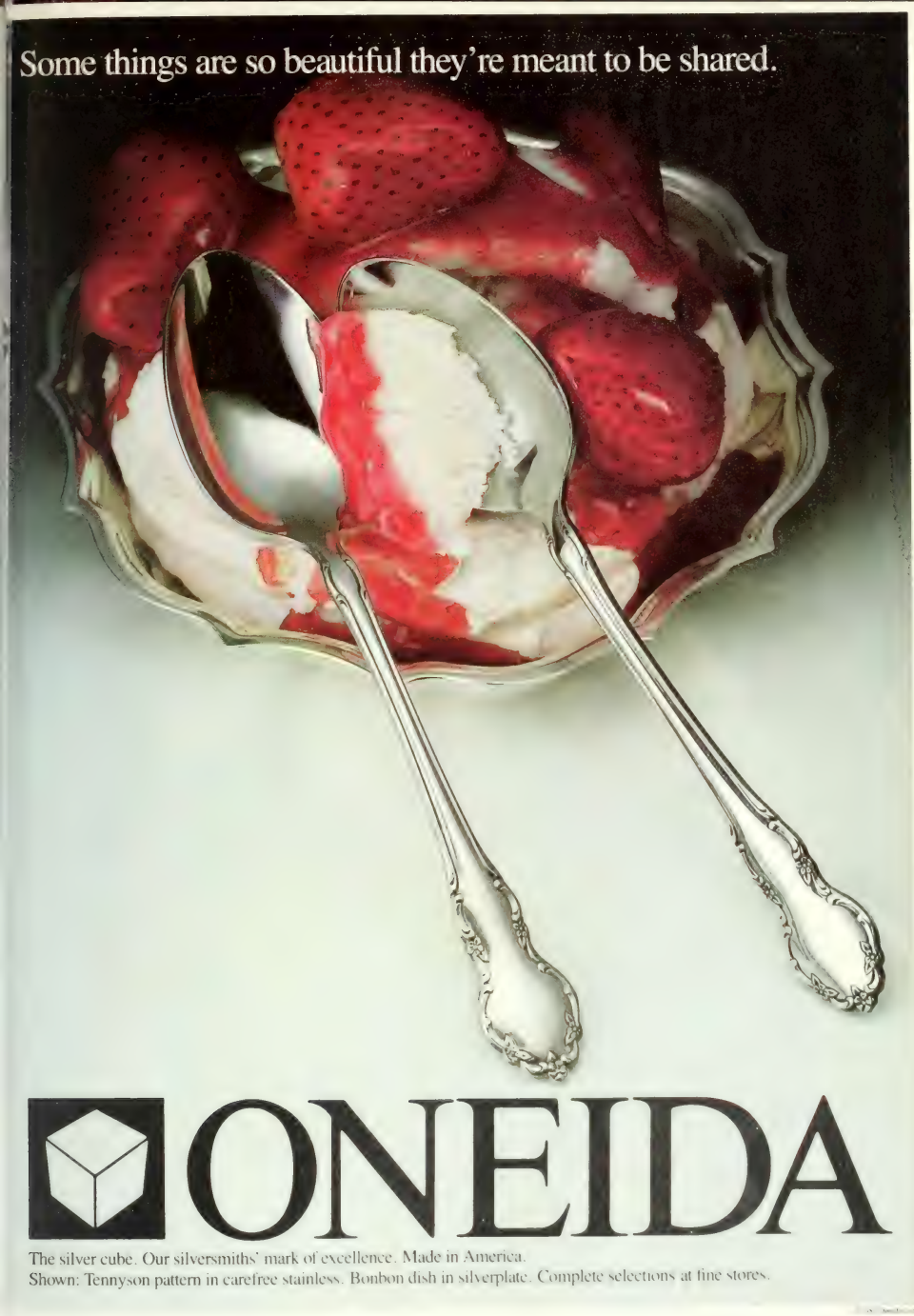


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STERLING ACHIEVEMENTS

James Robinson's range goes far beyond its famous flatware

By Elaine Greene

Edward Munves Jr. is talking to a visitor in the back of the large, gracious, quietly gleaming shop in New York that he owns and runs with his father. He makes an interesting slip of the tongue when he mentions the "busman's holidays" the family often takes: "We like to visit other museums." *Other museums:* it is not exactly a slip, he confesses, for though he calls himself a shopkeeper, he and his father cultivate the connoisseurship and erudition and fierce perfectionism of museum curators—curators, moreover, who teach.

Not all the cabinets in the James Robinson gallery display merchandise. One six-foot shelf, for example, is devoted to not-for-sale examples of antique flatware showing the historical development of English patterns: the earliest trifid, then the shield end, the Queen Anne rat-tail, the plain old English with its eventual bright-work-decorated edges, the fiddle forms with their eventual shell motifs, and finally the rococo, hourglass-shaped, pre-Victorian patterns. The display is there for customers to learn from.

When James Robinson, an Englishman, opened a New York shop in 1912, he sold silver but concentrated on Chinese Export porcelain. On Robinson's death in 1936, his young brother-in-law, Edward Munves Sr., took over the business and changed its emphasis. Antique silver, mostly English, came to make the shop's worldwide reputation and its silver department remains at the top. Antique porcelain and glass are still handled, as well as nineteenth-century jewelry, new silver flatware handmade in an English workshop that is over three hundred years old, and hollowware reproductions produced by several English silversmiths.



Above: Mr. and Mrs. Edward Munves Sr., Edward Munves Jr. *Below:* From top, George I reproduction cream jug, handles of 1777 spoon and new handmade fork.



Edward Munves Jr., out of college in 1952 and dreaming of becoming a sportswriter, worked in the shop to mark time and "got hooked," never to consider any other career.

Edward Munves Sr.'s second wife, Barbara, became a specialist in the early sixties when she started a separate department selling old silver plate for wedding presents, attracting people who find the world's best antique silver financially out of reach. James II, opened in 1966, grew out of this beginning, and it now occupies a whole floor of its own. Like the English countrytown shop of one's dreams, this big, cheerful, cozy, crammed series of rooms concentrates on nineteenth-century things: furniture, china, glass, silver plate, brass, games and toys, jewelry, picture frames, fireplace tools, and much more. For young people and beginning collectors of any age, Barbara Munves makes a point of stocking affordable objects, some priced as low as $25. "Later they can go downstairs," she says of the main Robinson gallery. Mrs. Munves's daughter, Julie Seymour, works with her, and drawing upon her college major in Victorian studies, she focuses on Pilkington, Moorcroft, and other art pottery.

There are few ways a child could please a parent more than to follow in the same profession. The senior Munveses share this parental pleasure with Edward Jr., whose daughter Joan is in her fourth year in the main shop. She is specializing in antique jewelry and has taken gemo- *(Continued on page 78)*


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Left: Among Robinson antiques are 1738 coffeepot, 1725 caster, server by Thomas Nash, 1773. *Center:* Typical of Robinson's jewelry, a circa 1860 English pendant. *Right:* At James II, Victorian chair, Mason Ironstone.

(Continued from page 76) logy courses, but she looks on the elder Munveses as her master teachers.

The father and son have much to teach. They know and enjoy their old silver with deep intimacy. A hallmark tells them the time and place and workshop of origin. Their eyes and their fingers tell them how much talent the designer had, how skilled a silversmith executed the work. They know how unusual the piece is among its peers and where it ranks in excellence. They can see and feel how good or bad a life the piece has had, whether it has been cherished or tampered with or abused. They know whether a piece was a stock item in the workshop or was made for a patron. And they see more: Edward Munves Sr. says, "When I look at an object, I know the man who made it—whether he was liberal or mean."

Talking about their work, the Munveses talk about the eye. How do they spot a clandestine silver repair? "The color—the color is in our eye." When Edward Jr. was at the Governor's Palace in Colonial Williamsburg recently, he said to the docent near the dining table, "Oh, I see you place the reproductions near the visitors and the antiques out of reach." The docent asked how he knew. "By the cast of the color."

Intimate knowledge of beautiful objects means loving them, but the Munveses' purpose is, after all, to part with them. They do so without too much sorrow because another estate sale or a buying trip to England is always in the offing, and because they never sell without assuring themselves that the buyer shares their knowledge and their fondness.

"We are not conduits," says Edward Munves Jr. "We spend hours with a customer before a purchase so that he or she can buy from strength, as a competent aesthetic judge. We feel numerous obligations to our customers, and one is to take the time to educate them." An observer at Robinson's will see that for every actual transaction, half a dozen other conversations may be going on at the same time that can be classified as art history instruction, and that may or may not lead to a sale. Someone may be watching the videotape that the Munveses will run for anyone who wants to give fifteen minutes to the production methods at the James Robinson workshop in England, source of their handmade silver.

Robinson's is this country's only resource for new silver made in the old way, completely by hand. The Munveses label their new eighteenth-century-style hollowware "reproductions" but consider the label incorrect for flatware made in a workshop in continuing production since about 1660. The old patterns still being made there recapitulate the history of English flatware shown in James Robinson's teaching exhibit.

A handmade place setting can be more expensive than the best machine-made examples, and potential buyers, after examining the incomparable modeling and color that handmaking yields, are often sent to other stores within a quarter-mile radius to see stamped silver with a more educated eye.

Because the silver is made by hand, variations are possible, but within limits set by James Robinson. Says Edward Munves Jr., "If a customer wants a variation that I think will be ugly—a spoon bowl too large for the handle, for example—I will make one for him. I will show him why it is ugly, but I will not sell it to him."

The English workshop is more than a supplier to the Munveses; it is their cause, their commitment to silversmithing. "We want to save and perpetuate this precarious trade." □

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THE FRENCH VILLAGE

How a real-estate magnate's vision of rural Normandy was uniquely Americanized near Philadelphia's Chestnut Hill

By Christopher Gray



The rustic fence, dim gaslights, and cobbled gutters on Elbow Lane give the French Village the feeling of a rural town.

Most people take little notice of the French Village's two gatehouses with octagonal towers that flank the road from Mount Airy to Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia's westernmost (and most proper) semi-suburb. But if you take the sudden left turn into Gate Lane, you are in an entirely different sort of place. Only halfway through does it strike you: the fieldstone houses are more or less alike, medieval or Norman style, with towers and garden walls and steep roofs of slate or tile. The planting is heavy, and the street is rough, with beautiful gutters of irregular stones and no city wires or lights, like a secluded country town. This is, well, it's sort of a . . . French village!

Built from 1924 to 1931, the French Village was the project of Dr. George Woodward, who inherited the real-estate empire of his father-in-law, Henry Howard Houston; together they are responsible for more of the development of the Chestnut Hill area than anyone else. Houston, a director of the Pennsylvania Railroad, had arranged the construction of a special line to Chestnut Hill in the 1880s to foster the development of his own properties. The rolling green hills of western Philadelphia had been dotted with country seats until that time, much like Cliveden, the famous estate of Benjamin Chew, in nearby Germantown. But the railroad made the country into an early suburb, first to summer residents but soon to year-rounders—the commute to downtown Philadelphia has always been around twenty-five minutes by rail.

Because of his railroad connections and extensive land holdings, Houston's vision was broader than that of the average developer, encompassing the entire district. He built or sponsored the Wissahickon Inn (now the boys' school Chestnut Hill Academy), St. Martin-in-the-Fields Episcopal Church, the Philadelphia Cricket Club, and the Philadelphia Horse Show, all to insure a brand of homogeneous gentility for which Chestnut Hill is still noted today (with more Social Register residents per capita than the Main Line).

Houston had acquired the hilly, wooded site on the rim of the Cresheim Creek Valley across from Chestnut Hill in the 1880s, but it was not suitable for conventional, turn-of-the-century development—like the small and medium-sized houses on rectangular grids that characterize much of the area.

By the twenties, flat land good for right-angled plots was scarce, and, fortuitously, *(Continued on page 84)*

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(Continued from page 82) Georg Woodward took a trip to France—t return with the idea of building a pic turesque collection of rural houses i the rugged style of Norman farm build ings. The whole idea could have been ludicrous disaster, a little Disneylan stage set, and indeed the son of Wood ward's chosen architect recalls that hi father Robert Rodes McGoodwi reluctantly accepted the commis sion—it seemed a bit melodramatic But McGoodwin laid out two privat streets in the form of a sickle—Gat Lane, short and straight with five smaller houses, and Elbow Lane, a long quarter circle, with nine large houses. And what might have looked silly on a broad, flat boulevard is skill fully modeled with the changing land scape to produce a subtle and brilliant group of houses.

The Gate Lane houses are lined up at the downslope side of the street, a common sidewalk wall screening their steeply pitched backyards and the valley beyond, now a part of Philadelphia's Fairmount Park System. The street passes under an archway before ending, and the corner gatehouse there also faces onto the great curve of Elbow Lane, a green tunnel of linden trees. There, the houses are more substantial, with deep setbacks, a few on the upslope side with level grounds, most on the downslope side, almost disappearing down into the thicket of the park. Despite the variety of house size, topography, and plotting, there is a distinctly homogeneous character to this enclave, apart from the broader similarities of style, material, and age. The steep lots create communal complaints (and boasts) about carrying lawn mowers up four flights of stairs, and also encourage the use of terraces. The stone keeps the houses cool (although one resident thinks this is a delusion) and reduces exterior maintenance. The houses on the hilly lots tend to be one room wide—and very tall. Several have nonsensical exterior staircases above the front door, similar to the keeps of medieval England and France.

Everyone is still under the spell of the place, where there are no picture windows, no wholesale remodeling, no odd paint jobs—the French Village looks as if each house were still owned by the *(Continued on page 86)*

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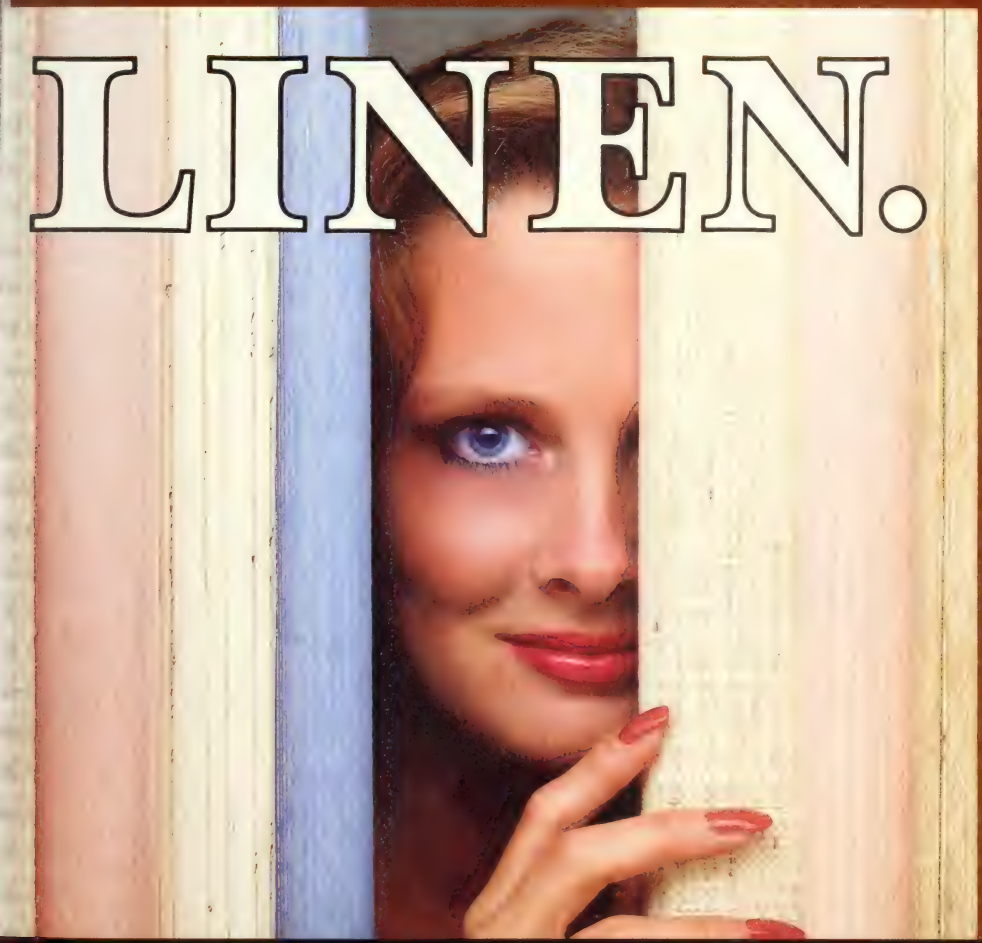
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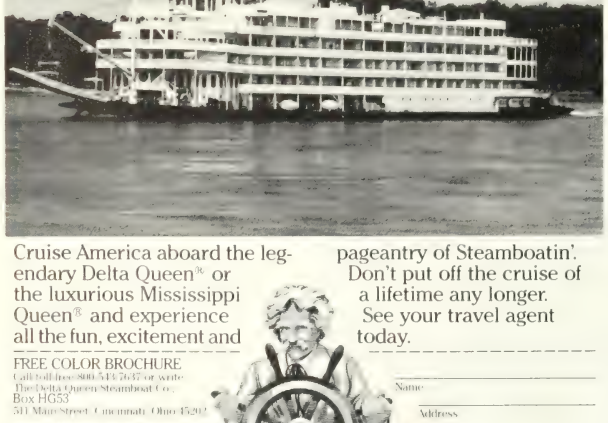
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(Continued from page 84) happy grand children of the original owners. Th sense of propriety in the French Villag is in one sense a facet of life in Philade phia—a conservative city, where soci rituals and hierarchies are highly deve oped, where there is a sort of insula disinterest in other cities—since every thing happens here, you had bette watch what you do. George Wooc ward's firm (still in family hands reflects that, holding hundreds of unit of Chestnut Hill rental housing (tha other firms would have sold long ago at what are widely agreed to be below market rentals—but only for rent t the genteel people who will take car of the buildings as well as Chestnu Hill. Indeed about half of the French Village was built for rental (the othe half was sold off as lots, with deed restrictions regarding style of archi tecture), and the Woodwards sold these rental units only very gradually over the last fifty years. Today, only two short-term rentals remain in the French Village.

The first residents of Gate and Elbow lanes were prosperous and polite but there were no "big" Philadelphia names like Morris, Cadwalader, or Widener, people who were more likely to bypass a suburban residence with both a country and city house. The first French Village families were known more to native Philadelphians than to outsiders: bankers and finance men like William Newhall, Francis Rue, Henry Boenning, Loring Dam, and Preston Lee, who were with such firms as Philadelphia National Bank, Brown Brothers, or Eastman Dillon; business people like James Skinner (head of Philco), Wilson Yerger (type), and Richard Oller (engineering); and professionals like Dr. Temple Fay (neurosurgery) and Richardson Dilworth (law).

"They were the typical Chestnut Hill families," recalls Francis Rue Jr., "bankers, lawyers, doctors." And clearly the Woodward presence reinforced their natural Philadelphian propriety. An early Gate Lane resident recalls George Woodward "gliding around in his electric car, sort of squinting out to see how people were treating his property"—even the houses he didn't own. The Woodwards were invited to a fiftieth anniversary party in *(Continued on page 88)*

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(Continued from page 86) 1975 and presented by the residents with a plaque in appreciation of the French Village. If this scene suggests students at a boarding school giving an award to its aging founder, there is much about the French Village that makes school a reasonable analogy—the "rules," the camaraderie, the common social background. Many of its residents remember it in just those terms: Mrs. Edwin Sheffield, daughter of Wilson Yerger, says "everybody was in school together—the Fays' daughter, Mary Oller, Barbara Newhall—we all went to Springside (the principal private girls' school in Chestnut Hill) and we still see each other. Dr. Fay always wanted to set up our own little school on the street so we wouldn't be exposed to colds and things." John Newhall, who grew up on Gate Lane, recalls the effect of living next to Cresheim Creek Park. "We would shoot quail down there, and we had two Jamaican cooks who'd put corn out on the lawn with a loop of string and pull pheasants right in through the kitchen window."

There is still substantial wildlife coming up from the park, and this predictability is what most residents seek from the French Village. "It's a finished neighborhood," says Frank Goodyear, president of The Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, "and you know you're not going to have three four new houses across the street. T harmony is established."

There have been a few changes the French Village, most of them exte nal in origin. The elms on Gate La have died—they used to span t street, like the lindens on Elbow. The are more corporate people now, li those of Lukens (steel), FMC (fa machinery), and Westmoreland Co and fewer bankers and lawyers. T rustic wooden gate on Gate Lane fin ly collapsed, ending the custom of Su day closings, spontaneously unde taken by the occupant of the ga house. But more things remain t same. The private street, without c lighting, is still country-dark at nig There is still a familiarity among t residents; they use each other's poo freely, but only when the owner away. And the houses remain intact.

Don't go if you're expecting an thing showy, a stage set of Normand this enclave is distinctly Philadelphia like the cricket clubs where no crick is played. The French Village is a pe fectly American merger of roman and tradition, with such a sense of p lite propriety that you feel you have ways lived there. □



Gables and chimneys of the French Village's fieldstone houses peer out from woods surrounding Cresheim Creek Park.


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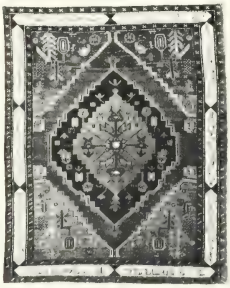
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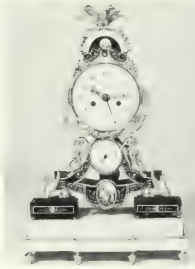
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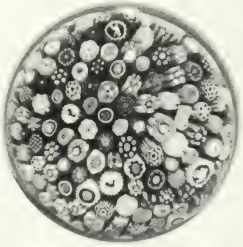
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The Yale Literary Magazine

America's Oldest Review

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Promenade by Igor Galanin, from the cover of a recent issue.

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CAROL

BY THOMAS MERTON

Flocks feed by darkness with a noise of whispers,
In the dry grass of pastures,
And lull the solemn night with their weak bells.

The little towns upon the rocky hills
Look down as meek as children:
Because they have seen come this holy time.

God's glory, now, is kindled gentler than low candlelight
Under the rafters of a barn:
Eternal Peace is sleeping in the hay,
And Wisdom's born in secret in a straw-roofed stable.

And O! Make holy music in the stars, you happy angels.
You shepherds, gather on the hill.
Look up, you timid flocks, where the three kings
Are coming through the wintry trees;
While we unnumbered children of the wicked centuries
Come after with our penances and prayers,
And lay them down in the sweet-smelling hay
Beside the wise men's golden jars.

In the heart of Bavaria's Ebersberger Wald, photographer Evelyn Hofer chose the perfect tree and had it decorated by Ludwig Beck of Munich, who have been a part of German Christmases for the past two hundred years. The hand-blown glass balls, birds, and nuts are available at Ludwig Beck in New York's Trump Tower.

PHOTOGRAPH BY EVELYN HOFER

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A VERY PRIVATE PASSION

Their magnificent collection of eighteenth-century English antiques is the focus of the lives of a most remarkable couple

BY MARTIN FILLER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY KAREN RADKAI

Opposite: A carved and inlaid walnut Queen Anne side chair, c. 1710, stands below a giltwood Chippendale bracket holding a seventeenth-century Chinese *sang-de-boeuf* porcelain bottle. *Above:* A George II walnut and parcel-gilt mirror reflects the entrance hall of the Gersh apartment in New York.





Though by no means rich, Gloria and Martin Gersh have assembled a collection that even a millionaire could not match without their scholarship, patience, and devotion to acquiring only the very best

High above the skyline of Manhattan is a small rooftop apartment that in the late afternoon is bathed in slanting sunlight. At that hour, the walls of its rooms, which are the precise color of Chinese peach-bloom porcelain, take on a deep, plummy glow. The light plays off the intricately carved cabriole legs of tables and chairs, bringing out deep golden highlights in the highly polished walnut and mahogany. Delicately chased silver gleams with a dazzling intensity, and the air itself seems somehow as precisely arranged as the exquisite objects that make up this carefully composed domestic still life. This is the home of Gloria and Martin Gersh, and the repository of their extraordinarily fine collection of eighteenth-century English antiques. But it is much more than that, too: this calm space and its gorgeously crafted contents are the offspring of the Gershes' imagination and ambition, the trophies of the past quarter century during which their energies and income were directed almost solely to one goal: the discovery and ownership of works that they consider unsurpassed in the history of the decorative arts.

Dedicated collectors are by no means hard to find, and such is the psychology of collecting that it commonly becomes a consuming obsession. But the Gershes go far beyond the norm of intensity to be found among the average enthusiast: the very nature of their lives has been largely determined by their deep devotion to their collection, and it has inspired priorities and sacrifices that most people, even hard-core acquisitors, would likely consider unthinkable.

When one first sees the Gersh apartment, one thinks instinctively that this is the home of rich people, not only because of the objects themselves—which are discernible even from a distance as being of superb quality—but also because of the utterly impeccable maintenance that they obviously enjoy. But in truth, Gloria and Martin Gersh are working New Yorkers: she is picture editor of *Vogue,* he recently retired from teaching junior-high-school math in the city's public school system and is now *Vogue*'s wine columnist—not positions in which great fortunes are usually made. How, then, did they amass a collection that any major museum would covet, that any enterprising dealer would love to offer to his clients, that any competitive collector would be eager to have for his own? There's no secret at all, as they tell it; you just have to be prepared to go without certain things.

"It is very difficult for people to believe we did what we did," says Mrs. Gersh as she surveys her living room, "but there were not vast resources at our disposal. Yet it can be done if you use absolutely everything that you've earned, literally. We never went to a restaurant, never went to a theater, never had a single vacation. We even had to decide when to have our shoes fixed. I remember one steamy Sunday in the summer when Martin and I were walking in Central Park—it was free—and we were thinking, 'Wouldn't it be marvelous to have some ice cream?' But we didn't have any money to buy ice cream. And there, on the path, was a dollar. It was as though someone had dropped manna from heaven."

During their almost 25 years of married life together, the Gershes have been in thrall to the arts of the woodcarver, the cabinetmaker, and the silversmith of eighteenth-century England, especially the second and third quarters of that amazingly productive period. Like all collectors, they began modestly, with a very simple Chippendale armchair they found in the country before they were married and a pair of inlaid wooden urns that were a prophetic wedding present from Gloria's mother. As Martin Gersh recalls, "We started out with the concept of not furnishing the house completely right away, but rather to buy every piece to keep always. Gloria was the teacher from the first, but her aim was more modest than mine; I was overcome by ambition once I began to be exposed to the finest."

They found it in the English furniture rooms at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, at what then was still Parke-Bernet, and most intimately in the galleries on 57th Street and along Madison Avenue in which they soon became familiar faces. This omnivorous process of self-education was based on their reading every available reference work on eighteenth-century English furniture, but it was most of all a matter of looking, looking, and still more looking. "I had the curiosity to learn," says Martin Gersh, "and there was plenty of opportunity to do it. I went to the shops every weekend, spent unlimited time there with no one *(Text continued on page 221)*

Opposite: The collectors at home: Gloria Gersh is seated in a George II open armchair of carved walnut, c. 1735. It is one of a pair they own; a matching example is in the Victoria & Albert Museum. Martin Gersh is seated on a George I walnut side chair, c. 1725. Behind Mrs. Gersh is an Adam inlaid satinwood urn, c. 1775, on a Regency pedestal of satinwood, amboyna, burl-walnut, and mahogany, with ormolu mounts and a marble top, c. 1810. The giltwood Chippendale bracket supports a *sang-de-boeuf* bowl.





The afternoon sun burnishes the rich woods of the living room. At the center is one of a pair of George II carved-mahogany card tables, c. 1755; on it is a spectacularly elaborate George II silver basket made in London by Edward Wakelin, the royal silversmith, in 1750–51. Beneath the table is a seventeenth-century Isfahan carpet. Standing against the wall is a superb George III collector's cabinet of mahogany, c. 1765. Forming a finial within its broken pediment is a seventeenth-century Chinese *sang-de-boeuf* gallipot vase. The George I side chairs flanking the cabinet and the matching armchair to the left are part of a larger set, with two other pairs of side chairs now in major English collections.



This page: Fanciful and yet controlled, a George II silver coffeepot by Benjamin Godfrey, London, 1740–41, exemplifies the English approach to the Rococo. *Opposite:* The coffeepot sits on the fall front of a George II burl-walnut and parcel-gilt secretary, c. 1730, one of the Gershes' most important pieces. Retaining its original gilt gesso cartouche, brass hardware, and mirrored doors, it is used as a desk but also doubles as a sideboard. In front of the secretary stands a carved walnut Queen Anne stool, c. 1705.







Above: In a corner of the living room, a carved mahogany Chippendale card table holds four beautifully crafted objects: an Adam bracket clock, c. 1775, with a movement by Benjamin Vulliamy of London, clockmaker to George III; flanking it, a pair of Louis XV silver wine cups by Claude Cochois of Troyes, c. 1750; between them, a rare Chelsea claret-ground saucer of the Gold Anchor period, c. 1765. On the wall above them, a giltwood Chippendale girandole. The urn and pedestal are described on page 99. *Opposite:* The only two lamps in the Gersh apartment are the George III silver candlesticks surmounting a pair of mahogany Chippendale torchères. The burl-walnut and parcel-gilt looking-glass was made about 1720, the George II carved mahogany side chair about 25 years later.



Opposite: Above the bed is one of the Gershes' two American objects: a New York walnut and parcel-gilt mirror, c. 1760. The bed is covered with the same silk damask by Scalamandré used to upholster the chairs in the living room. *Above:* In the bedroom, the third of the Gershes' three impressive pieces of broken-pediment furniture: a George II mahogany chest-on-chest with strong Classical detailing, c. 1750. On either side of it are two of a set of four George III carved mahogany hall chairs attributed to Thomas Chippendale, c. 1765. In the foreground, a Louis XVI silver snuff box, c. 1775, sits on top of a chest. *Below:* The chest, possibly made for silver storage, is used by the Gershes to store towels. This George II carved mahogany piece dates from around 1750.





YVES SAINT LAURENT'S ENCHANTED LANDSCAPE

BY FLEUR CHAMPIN
PHOTOGRAPHS
BY JOCELYN KARGÈRE

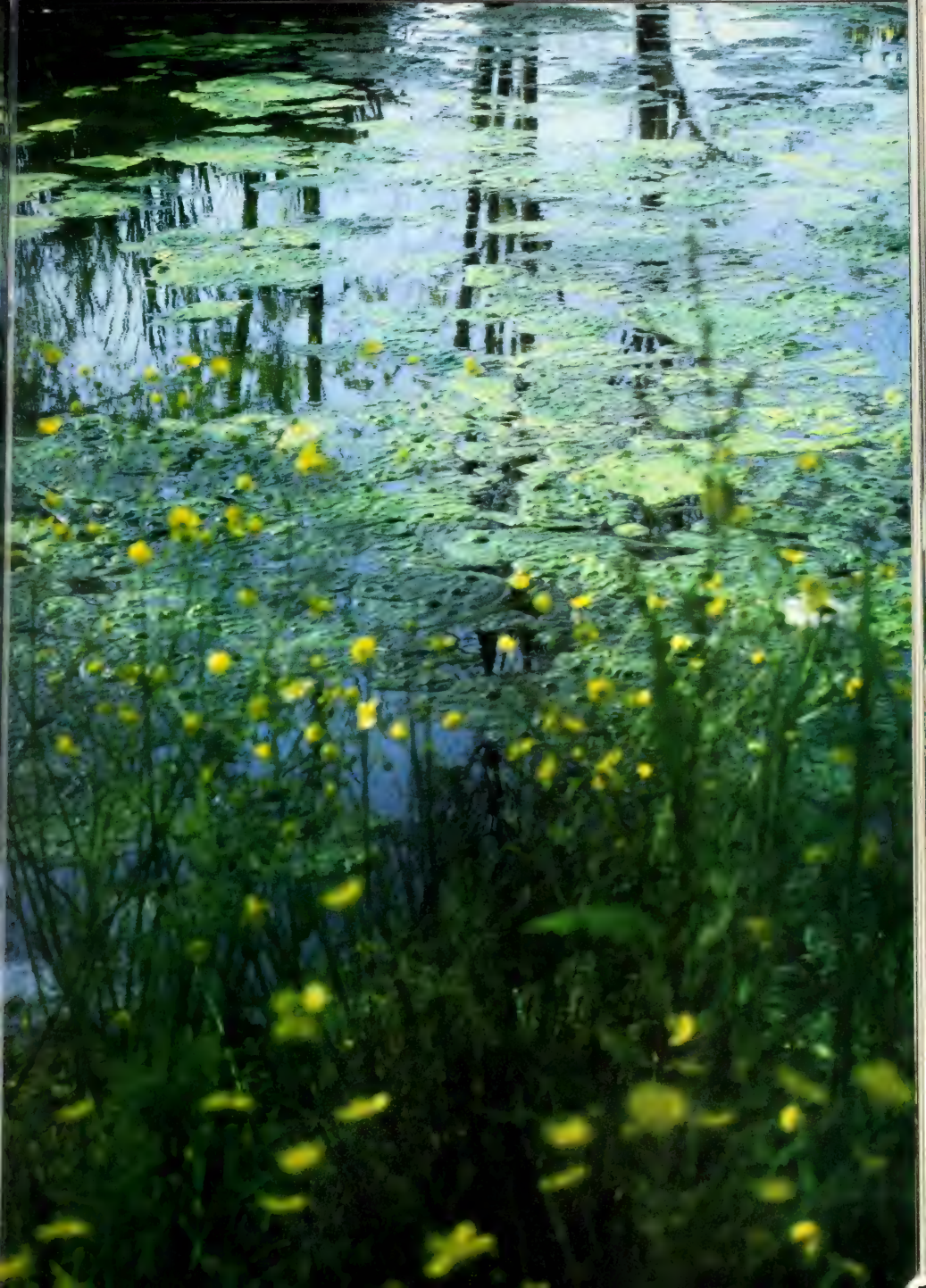
Most infant gardens should be heard of, not seen. It is but an elite among gardeners who discern shapes and colors, hear the birds and the fountains, and smell the fragrances of old rosebushes where others with less imagination see only a collection of matchsticks and mulch in a desolate meadow.

Started only three years ago, Yves Saint Laurent's idyllic world (though it lacks the pigs and pumpkins so dear to the heart of P.G. Wodehouse and Lord Emsworth) is well on its way to becoming one of the best of the late-twentieth-century creations. The scheme is as old as civilization, the technique modern, and the plants varied and lovingly selected. More than a garden, this new venture is a way of life: Yves Saint Laurent and Pierre Bergé are currently farming a sixty-acre estate in Normandy, three miles from Deauville, the fashionable seaside resort invented by the Duc de Morny. The bright crowds of the summer months busy with the casino, the polo, golf, and tennis tournaments, the races, the yearling sales, or the American Film Festival organized by Mayor Anne d'Ornano have not ruined the rural setting. On the contrary, they have contributed to its conservation if only by planting trees and hedges that help fight erosion, provide shelter from the salty wind, and retain moisture. Since the 1860s modern villas and remodeled "farms" have been fiercely competing with very grand hotels to make Deauville a symbol of elegance and charm, while the locals go on with dairy farming and cider making, their traditional activities.









At Chateau Gabriel, a rather big orchard has just been planted with a thousand apple trees; in due course excellent cider will be produced (what else could you expect from a perfectionist) and eventually marketed. There is a stable with three horses in it and a groom to exercise them when Pierre Bergé is not there to drive his sulky. Incidently, that rarity, horse manure, is not only good for hotbeds. It's a quick-action top-dressing, while cow manure has a more lasting effect. There is a herd of brown-and-white *vaches normandes* complete with offspring; apart from producing milk and cream (that famous Normandy cream which no self-respecting recipe should be without) the cows add an enchanted timeless quality to the landscape.

That landscape is what Yves Saint Laurent fell in love with, the reason he bought the place, according to Pierre Bergé. The magical atmosphere in the changing light, the glitter or the haze on the sea, and the immensity of the horizon beyond the gently sloping hills keep you spellbound. Mind you, lots of people quite fail to see it because they haven't got enough time for contemplation; in practical Deauvillese there is a saying: "When you can see Le Havre, it is about to rain; when you cannot, it is raining." . . . So much for practical thoughts.

There is a lot of practicality about Chateau Gabriel, including a well-appointed vegetable garden on a south slope behind the farm. There you will find basins to collect rain water for the more fragile plants and a hothouse for orchids (Swann's favorite) and other house plants for the winter garden, seed beds for crisp lettuces, and an herb garden in between Hidcote lavender hedges. Yves Saint Laurent likes to make the flower arrangements, so there's a flower plot sheltered by low hornbeam hedges 24 inches high by 20. Farther on, Dutch limes—320 years ago one of Louis XIV's first choices for his young garden at Versailles—have been planted fifteen feet apart. Behind them are wild uncultivated strawberries, red currants, and gooseberries. Near a copse underplanted with rhododendrons are Michaelmas daisies, Japanese cabbage, and rhubarb, both edible and ornamental.

But the most practical innovation is a carefully hidden red-brick landing pad for Pierre Bergé's white helicopter. With the 130-mile journey reduced to a 25-minute flight the Chateau Gabriel has become a year-round house and garden. It has made "instant gardening" possible, bringing on the spot in a





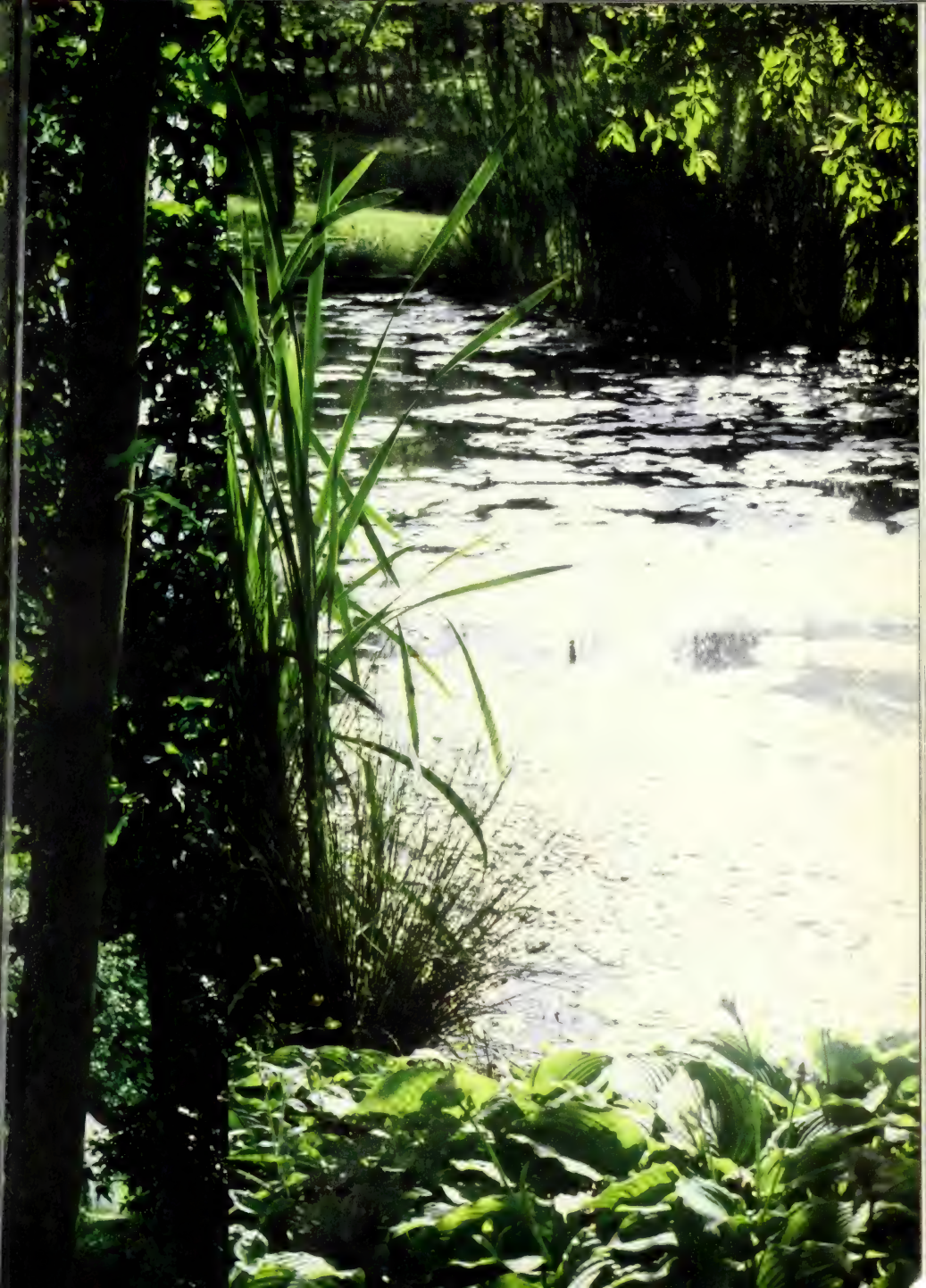
matter of minutes both the owners and their friends, landscape architects Jacques Dedat and Franz Baechler. While the planting of fifteen-foot-tall subjects (it has been tried successfully, so far, with a Japanese maple, a wisteria, a *Magnolia Sieboldii,* as well as with rhododendrons) takes place after weeks of reflection and careful planning, there are always snap decisions to be taken in situ, not to mention last-minute changes all requiring the physical presence of the brain trust.

Next to three white elegant *Pyrus salicifolia,* the rose garden is made of squares of different colors chosen by Yves Saint Laurent. Lawn paths and clipped box hedges set off a rather good collection of standards old and new: Christian Dior (1958) and Maria Callas (1965) are found near Frau Karl Druschki (1901) or the exquisite shell-pink Baroness Rothschild (1868), a great favorite of Miss Jekyll. All around and less formally planted, let alone pruned, are the ramblers and climbers Mermaid and Rosa mundi, Blanche Moreau or Nevada, the last a tribute to Vita Sackville-West, leading spirit of this garden.

The gothic entrance gate is on a bridge; underneath the banks of the cascade have been planted poetically with *Hydrangea paniculata* (so obviously happy there that one produced some forty flowers in its first year), *H. quercifolia* or *H. Sargentiana,* whose dark-green foliage contrasts with patches of irises from Monsieur Cayeux's famous collection and from Louisiana. Farther on, the water is collected in two basins. Ducks and bullrushes, *Galtonia* and *Hosta* are everywhere, and carefully protected weeds give this bog garden the atmosphere of a wild garden.

Even if the Japanese influence is obvious, you would look in vain for the usual paraphernalia. Douce, the tame doe, may remind you of Nara, but you won't find her eating her way through rare plants; there is no water-filled bamboo to frighten the birds away, no tea pavilion of improbable architecture (after all, the house itself is enough of a "folly"), not even a stone lantern. Instead a friendly ghost haunts the garden. Yves Saint Laurent, the magician, having discovered a reconstructed stone statue in one of those junk shops by the road, promptly ordered five identical units. Like Aladdin he can make this particular genie appear and disappear, and you keep meeting her, a lovely eighteenth-century lady reminiscing on the Anglo-Chinese gardens of her youth and watching with sympathy the progress through trial and error of this very young paradise. □

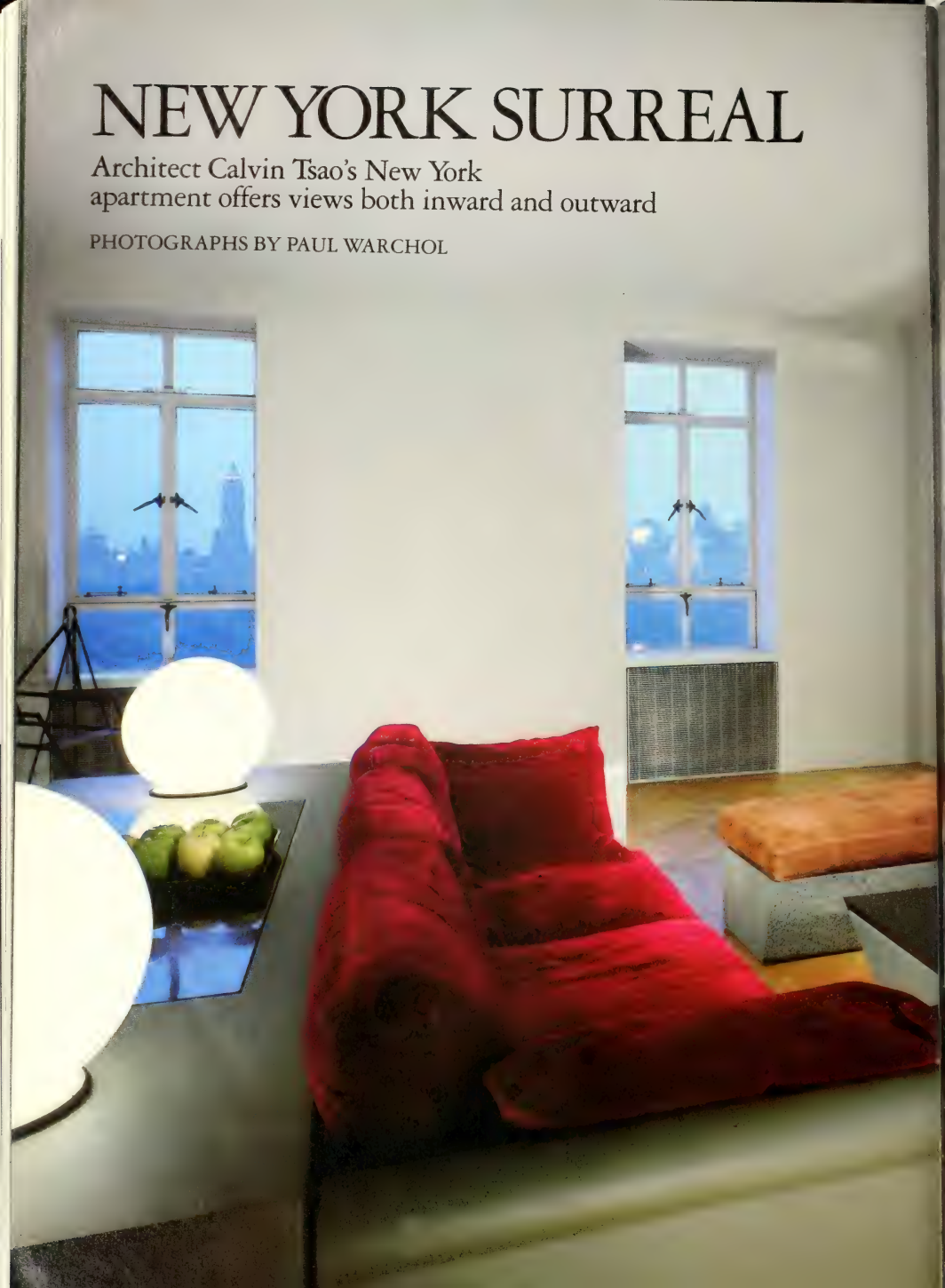




NEW YORK SURREAL

Architect Calvin Tsao's New York apartment offers views both inward and outward

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL WARCHOL





Overlooking Central Park, the living room of Calvin Tsao's apartment, which he remodeled in collaboration with his Harvard architecture classmate Zack McKown, is dominated by a *faux-granit* fireplace dematerialized by a tilted mirror inset. The small schist pyramid on the low table was bought in Egypt for a dollar and is one of several playful scale references. The banquettes flanking the hearth are covered in rust buckskin, the built-in sofa in ruby velvet.



The symmetrical plan of the apartment and the simplified surfaces of its rooms reflect the architects' belief that the Classical and the Modern need not be mutually exclusive



Above: A stuffed pigeon and French Art Nouveau candelabrum frame the view into the entry hall. *Opposite:* The dining room is furnished with a trestle table designed by Tsao and metal chairs he adapted from an orthopedic back chair he found in the building's basement. The Austrian chandelier was said by its previous owner to have been a gift from Sigmund Freud. The wall relief is also by the architect-owner.
Below: Detail of living-room sofa, another Tsao design.

When young architects design for themselves, the results are often more revealing than they are at later points in a career. The personal beliefs and ambitions that often cannot be expressed in designs for an employer or a client frequently find their fullest expression in those young architects' own houses. The Manhattan apartment of Calvin Tsao, who works in the office of I.M. Pei, is an unusual example: it is in one of New York's most prestigious buildings facing Central Park, its materials are uncommonly luxurious, and its design runs counter to the Neoclassical preoccupations of many of his young contemporaries. Working with fellow architect Zack McKown, Tsao devised a scheme in which seemingly minor (but highly effective) alterations both clarified the layout of the apartment and transformed its spaces into strong backdrops for Tsao's surprising overlay of quite unarchitectural objects, posing metaphors Mr. Pei never dreamed of.





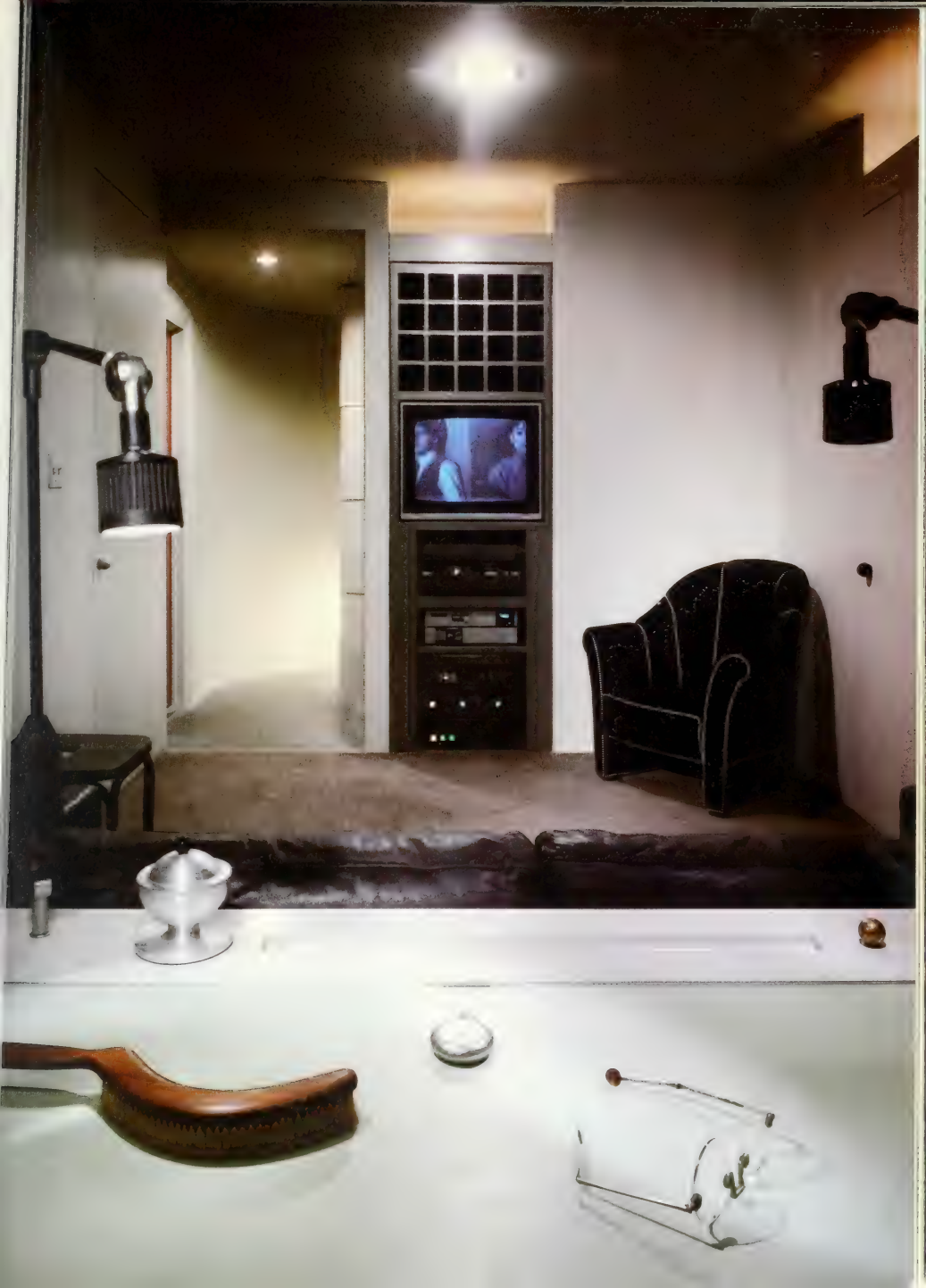
Calvin Tsao and Zack McKown are correct when they note that there was a strong Classical undercurrent in much Early Modernist architecture, one reason why they have sided with neither the Modernist nor Post Modernist factions into which their contemporaries have polarized themselves. "Why create a rift when you don't really have to?" asks Tsao, adding, "We decided to split the design of the apartment apart, to make the plan Classical and the three-dimensional treatment of the spaces Modern. In the end they worked so well together that we came to the conclusion that there's no difference at all between the two."

Not quite. The Tsao apartment has none of the moldings, cornices, brackets, columns, or pediments that have resurfaced in recent remodelings of similar apartments. And its array of highly suggestive motifs—such as a pyramidal fireplace surround painted to resemble huge blocks of stone—does not fit into the kind of architectural business-as-usual likely to be encountered in remodelings of this sort.

Tsao's highly idiosyncratic collection of objects stands out with almost hallucinatory clarity against the clean, neutral backgrounds. There is a stuffed pigeon (an allusion to Central Park); there is a greenhouse flat of growing grass ("Everyone needs to have his own little lawn," says Tsao); there is a tiny child's rocking chair set at a confrontational angle across from Tsao's large bed (not only a play on scale, but also a comment on growing up). It all exists within its own realm, neither decorative nor architectural, an exceedingly personal set of symbols with meanings as special to their possessor as family heirlooms are to other people.

In the end, the style that comes to mind most *(Text continued on page 215)*

Opposite: The study contains the architect's illuminated drafting table in the foreground and storage space for blueprints above the television, on which a videotape of the apartment's designers is being played. In the right corner is a reproduction of Josef Hoffman's 1911 armchair for his Koller house; at the left are reproduction of the stool Otto Wagner designed for his Vienna Postal Savings Bank of 1904–06. *Above:* The bedroom's one major piece of furniture is the flame-cut oak veneer and matte lacquer bed-and-bookcase designed by Calvin Tsao. Its wing-like bracket shelves and a pair of non-functioning wheels (out of view at the rear bottom) give it the air of a celestial dream chariot. The whimsical night light set into a niche is by New York toymaker David Kirk.



ZUCKERMAN FOUND?

Philip Roth's one-man art colony

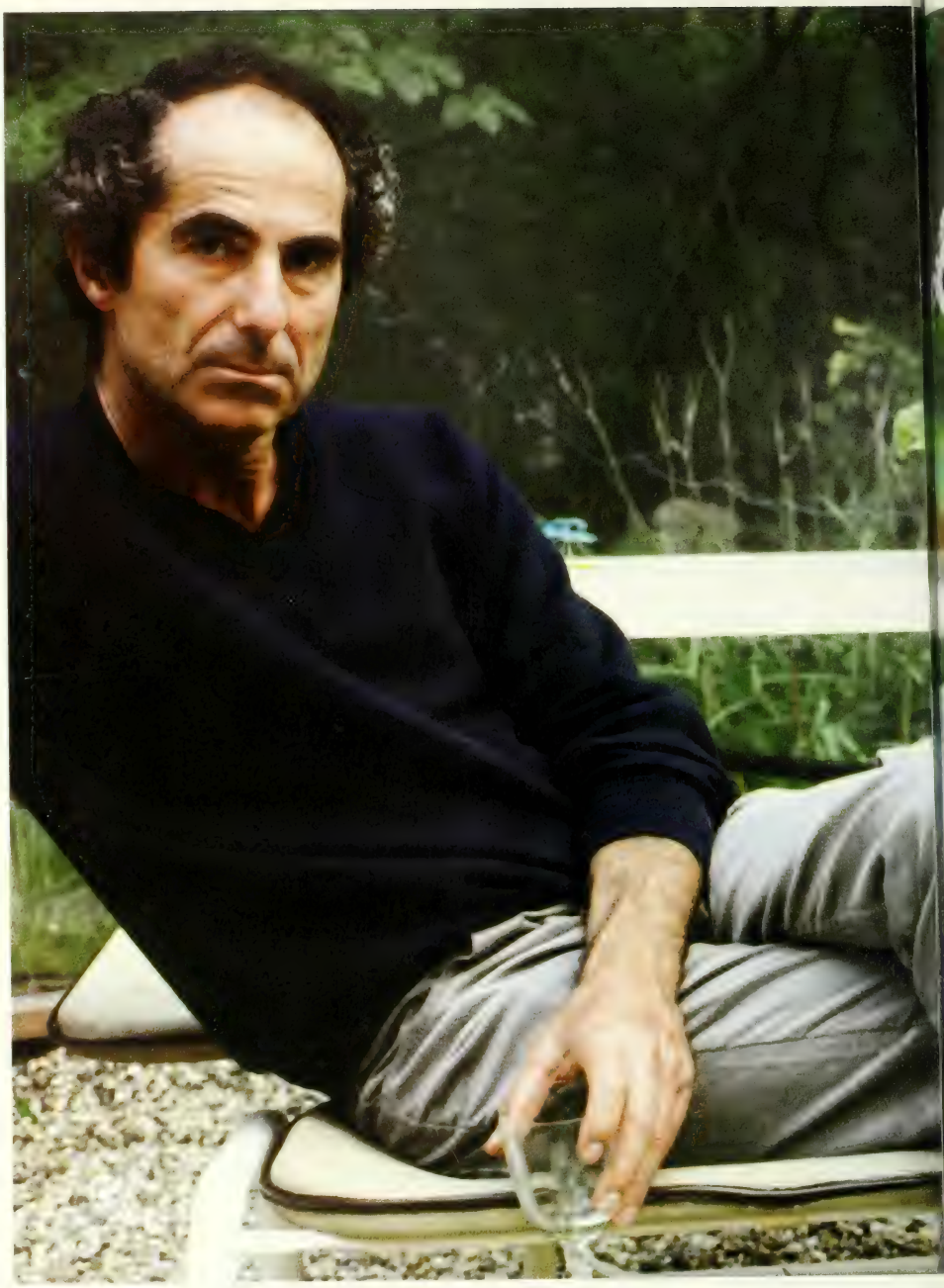


Distracted and enraged by life in New York, Philip Roth fled to Connecticut's second-smallest municipality a decade ago, hoping to find "an environment where working made sense." His 1790s farmhouse — which he now shares with Claire Bloom — has given him that, and more

BY JESSE KORNBLUTH
PHOTOGRAPHS BY SHEILA METZNER

Opposite: A previous owner paid the town to move the road behind the house. That it faces nowhere delights Roth. So does a bedroom overlooking trees, rooms that required little renovation, and dirt roads that give him an unending variety of walks (with hats, *above,* worn less for style than to keep the bugs away).





In summer, Roth and Bloom meet in a mesh-covered dome. This summer



.oth spent more time there: "I'd forgotten how wonderful it is not to work "





Above: The living room neatly accommodates furniture from Roth's New York apartment and a few North African rugs. *Opposite:* The "stone room" serves as a summer living and dining room for Roth and Bloom. It is minimally furnished; the point is the view through sliding doors of meadows and woods. *Below:* The books and pictures of Roth and Bloom are discreetly tucked away in Roth's study.

At 23, Nathan Zuckerman is primed for success. He has published four stories, had his picture in the *Saturday Review,* and been welcomed at the Quahsay Colony. All he lacks, as he sees it, is "the magical protection" of a mentor—and who better for the job than E.I. Lonoff, the immigrant child who grew up to write like Chekhov, marry the scion of an old New England family, and live "in the *goyish* wilderness of birds and trees"? So Zuckerman contacts Lonoff. Lonoff responds. And, on a December afternoon in 1956, with the light failing and his anxiety peaking, Zuckerman makes his way up an unpaved road in the Berkshires to Lonoff's shingled home.

Literary sponsorship may be Zuckerman's purpose, but as he enters the two-hundred-year-old clapboard farmhouse, Lonoff's bookshelves aren't what he first notices. For Lonoff's "neat, cozy, and plain" living room is more of a writer's fantasy than anything a decorator—or Zuckerman—could dream up. The sofa is worn, the walls are almost bare, the view of dark maples and fields of snow is framed by primly tied cotton curtains. "Purity. Serenity. Simplicity. Seclusion. All one's concentration and flamboyance and originality reserved for the grueling, exalted, transcendent calling," Zuckerman rhapsodizes. And he makes a pledge to himself: "This is how I will live."



It is a commonplace among Philip Roth's readers and critics to hold that Nathan Zuckerman—the young careerist of *The Ghost Writer,* the notorious best-selling novelist of *Zuckerman Unbound,* and now the writer-out obsessive of *The Anatomy Lesson*—is nothing more than a stand-in for his creator. The joke's on them. For although Nathan Zuckerman can be found, as *The Anatomy Lesson* opens, writhing in pain on a plastic-covered mat in his New York apartment, Philip Roth has been living in Connecticut's second-smallest municipality in a house almost exactly like Lonoff's since 1972, well before he began the Zuckerman trilogy. And if Roth, like Zuckerman, is full of complaints about his profession, he also takes deep comfort in a home that, like Lonoff's, gives him nature as "a backdrop to my thoughts."

A Jewish writer from Newark living with a beautiful English actress in the most fashionable corner of rural *(Text continued on page 213)*





Above: A travel souvenir and a cherished picture of Kafka grace Roth's file cabinets. He discourages reading too much into the picture and delights in quoting a guest's question: "What are you doing with a picture of Richard Benjamin?"
Left: The studio sits far enough away from the house so that Bloom has to ring a bell to summon Roth.

"We have some friends around, but we hardly see anyone during the week," Roth says. "Work gets done here. That's the idea"



Above: A woodstove is the major amenity of this guest bedroom, but Roth and Bloom (at *right,* in the summer room) usually find diversion in one another and nature. "I haven't become a pantheist living out here," Roth says. "I've become more of a writer."









SEASIDE URBANITY

Mrs. Burrall Hoffman's Florida house reflects the owners' cosmopolitan taste

BY MARY McDOUGALL
PHOTOGRAPHS BY EDGAR DE EVIA

Left: Comfort and glamour in the drawing room. The lacquer screen is an underwater scene by Robert Chanler. *Above:* The bedrooms open to steps down to the pool.



Once, when they did not know each other very well, they were driving through Long Island and she drew his attention to a Westbury church she thought very beautiful. He had designed it and it was then, she says, that he first looked on her with serious interest

In 1965, over sixty years after he qualified as an architect, F. Burrall Hoffman designed a house for himself and his wife in Florida. "Hoffman," writes Brendan Gill, "was one of those architects of the twenties and thirties in the distinguished company of William Adams Delano, Welles Bosworth, and John Russell Pope, who, reverencing the past, contrived to breathe new life into the old conventions. Especially in the design of private houses, their innovations exhibited a gentleness and very welcome playfulness; their sunny drawing rooms, snug libraries, and long parterres seemed to embody the happy maxim of Marcus Aurelius which proclaims that even in a palace, life can be lived well."

Hoffman built a palace, Vizcaya on Biscayne Bay in Florida, often described as the finest house ever built in America, but his own house is small and simple, meeting the needs of a new era. It has a classical symmetry; however, two matching rooms flank a big central drawing room. The sixteen-foot ceil-





Far left: The lofty proportions of the drawing room. Mr. Hoffman designed the chandelier himself and had it made by local craftsmen. *Below left:* The zebra screen was painted by friend and contemporary Robert Chanler. The table was bought in Naples, the Roman bronze head acquired by Mr. Hoffman while on the two-year Grand Tour he took after graduating from the Beaux-Arts. *Left:* A photograph of Mr. Hoffman stands beneath a portrait of his grandfather and a watercolor of himself at his desk. *Below:* Another Hoffman portrait above the fireplace. The bronze is by Charles Romsey and the andirons are sculptures by John Gregory.

ing of the square drawing room gives a feeling of almost ecclesiastical coolness, a welcome relief from the grilling sun outside. Just as Vizcaya houses the objects collected by industrialist James Deering over 25 years, so too the Hoffmans' house contains the results of years of acquisitive traveling. They lived in France and made many trips throughout Europe, and souvenirs of their travels are to be found in Mr. Hoffman's charming watercolors and in the objects they brought home. The painted table was bought in Naples; the crystal in the dining room and the furniture in Mr. Hoffman's bedroom came from England; nearly all the chairs were acquired at different times and in different places in France; the luxurious crepe de Chine sheets were bought by the dozen in Paris—"Before the war," says Mrs. Hoffman, "buying a trousseau was a serious business"; the eighteenth-century boiserie in the bedroom was found at an *antiquaire*. Their cosmopolitan taste is apparent as are their roots in the United States. In the drawing









THE INDOMITABLE MISS BRAYTON

The eccentric and wily lady from Fall River created a garden of giant topiary, wrote books on George Berkeley, and gave parties that wooed and drew the *gratin* of Newport

BY MARY McCARTHY

In the last quarter of her life, Alice Brayton's garden in Portsmouth, on the island of Rhode Island, became a social magnet for visitors to Newport, "society's summer capital," a fifteen-minute drive away. I was first brought to see it in 1949, when I had moved to a farmhouse on Union Street, Portsmouth, and already, on that first afternoon, I had the sense of being taken to a delightful little circus with its own P.T. Barnum in the form of a small white-haired spinster ("I'm not an old maid, I'm a spinster"), the owner, the impresario, and a principal exhibit of the show.

Officially the property was famous for its topiary work, the "Green Animals" she had decided to name it for at about the time I met her. Before that, it had no name, not pretending to be an estate; the address was simply "Cory's Lane, Portsmouth"—an address it shared with the Priory, a boys' school run by "black" Benedictines across the country road. The land sloped down to Narragansett Bay, which made for very mild winters allowing her to grow figs, virtually unheard of elsewhere in that part of the world, and bamboo for staking. The topiary collection stood on an elevation like a grassy platform behind the large white frame house, and several of the privet animals—the giraffe, the camel, the ostrich, the elephant, the horse and rider—besides being raised on clipped green pedestals, were unusually tall in their own right, so that the impression on one's coming from Cory's Lane was of a sheared family of Mesozoic creatures—dinosaurs, pterodactyls.

That impression remained even though the greater number of the animals belonged to the classic repertory—a swan, a pair of peacocks, a unicorn, a bear, a boar, a cock, a she-wolf (copied from the Roman bronze of Romulus and Remus's foster-parent); there were also baskets with handles, tall tubular forms resembling tops, and (the greatest hit) a policeman at the entry with a night stick and a metal star on his bristly green chest.

The general assumption was that the animals were a collaboration between Alice Brayton's fancy and the clippers of a family of Portuguese gardeners who worked and lived on the place. But sometimes she would disown her own part in the creation. "Folk art," she said dryly when in that humor. "It all came out of Joe's head." At other times she insisted that the topiary was as old as herself; in that version she was just the curator, maintaining it "as it was"—this despite the fact that there were accessions to the collection, including, if I'm not mistaken, the policeman, who could hardly have been "in restoration" when I first saw the garden.

It was the same with the inside of the house: she could

COURTESY ALICE BRAYTON FAMILY ALBUM

Opposite: The "gingery" Miss Alice Brayton in her garden



Above: Miss Brayton in her youth

Miss Brayton was a prankish moralist. Most of the fables she related of human wickedness showed people getting what they asked for, in perfect justice

never decide whether she preferred to have us think that wallpapers, draperies, and so on were "original," i.e., more than 150 years old (the age of the house varied, too, according to her mood) or testimony to her prowess as a decorator. Was it better to have had "ancestors" or to be a genius on one's own account—self-made? I don't think Miss Brayton was ever able to settle her mind on that point, which nevertheless was the pivot of her existence. The truth was she had created something indisputably her own—her gingery self, her evolving animals, her continually revised mythology of wallpapers, draperies, carpets, bell-pulls—and never knew whether to be proud of that or ashamed.

Alice Brayton did not come from Portsmouth. She was a Fall River woman, from one of the ruling mill families; Lizzie Borden was a cousin or cousin once removed. The Fall River gentry—Hazards and Durfees, Bordens and Braytons (there was also a "Satan" Drayton)—were plain people, largely uninfluenced by their wealth. In Fall River, I was told, husbands and wives were seated side by side at dinners, on the ground that at least they would have something to talk about. Practical, hard-headed people; the main business block was called "Granite Block" and looked it. Another Brayton I knew, a granitic young lawyer with an office in the block, gave me his matter-of-fact prescription for surviving the "wild" late-starting (6:30 P.M.) cocktail parties of a Westport Harbor hostess: "I have my supper first."

In fact, as I now know, the Portsmouth house was not a family property but a purchase Alice Brayton's father made. It was normal for well-off Fall River people to have summer houses near the seashore, which was how, I suppose, "Green Animals" started out. But the vicinity of Newport, for Miss Brayton later a strategic height to be scaled with rope ladders, was a little "different." Usually Fall River men did not take their wives and children so far; they went (and still did in my time) to Westport Harbor, Sakonnet, *à la rigueur* to Little Compton. I would love to have seen the inside of Alice Brayton's "real house" in Fall River; if I remember the outside right, it was gray, stone, square, without frills—no gazebo on the lawn, not so much as an arbor. But she had not lived there for many years when it was pointed out to me, on Cliff Street, naturally—she herself never spoke of it, as though it were a divorced relation.

Now, ten years after her death, I learn from a book on Eastern public gardens that her father, Thomas Brayton of the Union Cotton Manufacturing Co., Fall River, bought the Portsmouth house in 1872 and that the topiary dates from 1893. According to this authority, he had seen topiary work in a botanical garden in the Azores and hired a gardener, Joseph Carreiro, a native of the Azores, to make something like it for him on Narragansett Bay. But *is* there a botanical garden in the steep volcanic Azores, mainly noted for the growing of pineapples? And what was a Massachusetts mill owner doing in the Azores anyway—hiring Portuguese labor to sweat? I feel very skeptical about that part of the tale. It sounds like a typical Alice Brayton invention, very much in her narrative vein, and has the virtue of providing her animals with ancestors.

Miss Brayton was a fabulist. I do not think she lied about other people (she was mischievous but not malicious), nor to obtain advantage or get herself out of a scrape. She was a pure spinner of tales and myths centering on herself and her life story. She lied constantly, inveterately; it was almost one of her charms. You discovered to your amazement that you could not trust anything she told you pertaining to herself or to anything she owned.

And did she sometimes catch herself lying? If so, what an awful experience. She professed to hate liars, and I believed her. As she grew older, she grew more class-obsessed, and it distressed me to hear her talk more and more wildly after her second martini on themes of class and race—I felt ashamed for her. One of her phobic convictions on the subject of "them"—Portuguese, Catholics, Irish, the whole race of millhands—was that they lied. When the fit was on her, she liked to explain that the difference between "us" and "them" boiled down to that: "we" never told a lie. As an observant little party, she knew better. It is a puzzle to me where she got her fantastic delusion of being a truth-teller either as an individual *or* as a representative of her class. I wonder whether for her it may not have figured as a synonym for outspokenness, the habit of speaking her mind. Maybe she honestly did more of that than the lesser breeds—she could afford it.

But to leave general speculation and get down to brass tacks: *did* she plant the pair of Turkish oaks that stood at the head of the garden, by the water-lily pool? She maintained that she grew them from two acorns that she had buried at the spot when she was a little girl. Oaks are slow growers, yet here the two were, nodding as she told their story, ninety or a hundred feet tall. Years ago, alas, when I looked them up in a tree book with the thought of planting a pair of my own, I found reference only to a "turkey oak" (*Quercus laevis*), a small Southern variety whose popular name is said to derive from the wild turkeys attracted to the sweet acorn—no resemblance to the ones on Cory's Lane.

But wait. Hers, I now discover, trying an older book, must have been *Quercus cerris,* also known as "turkey oak," a fast grower that was brought to England from the Turkish peninsula and became fashionable with nurserymen in late Victorian times. So Miss Brayton stands vindicated; even the dates tally. If the trees had reached their full height when she was seventy years old, she could well have been eight when she planted them. There is just one bothersome note: in today's descriptive flyer, issued by the Newport Preservation Society, no Turkish oaks are listed, and in the spot where they ought to be, bordering on the lily pool, is "White oak, *Quercus alba,*" a common native article, of which in the diagram there do appear to be two.

And what about the stair carpet she tacked up the front stairs "for Mother," because Father would not let her have one? "Drugget," said Miss Brayton, with a droll little sniff to show she was speaking figuratively, drugget being a lowly cotton material, brown or dun colored, that one read about in old novels where the characters are struggling to make ends meet. With the memory of tears in her old gray-blue eyes, she drew a word picture of herself on her knees on the bare treads, with hammer and carpet tacks hastening to finish the loving task before Father came home. It was her notion that I, though in less cruel circumstances, might use a strip of tan canvas (from Wilmarth's in Newport)for our front stairs in the old Coggeshall house on Union Street. I obeyed, and there is still a runner of tan duck (no, not the same one) on the front and back stairs of our house in Maine—people often ask me how I came to think of the idea.

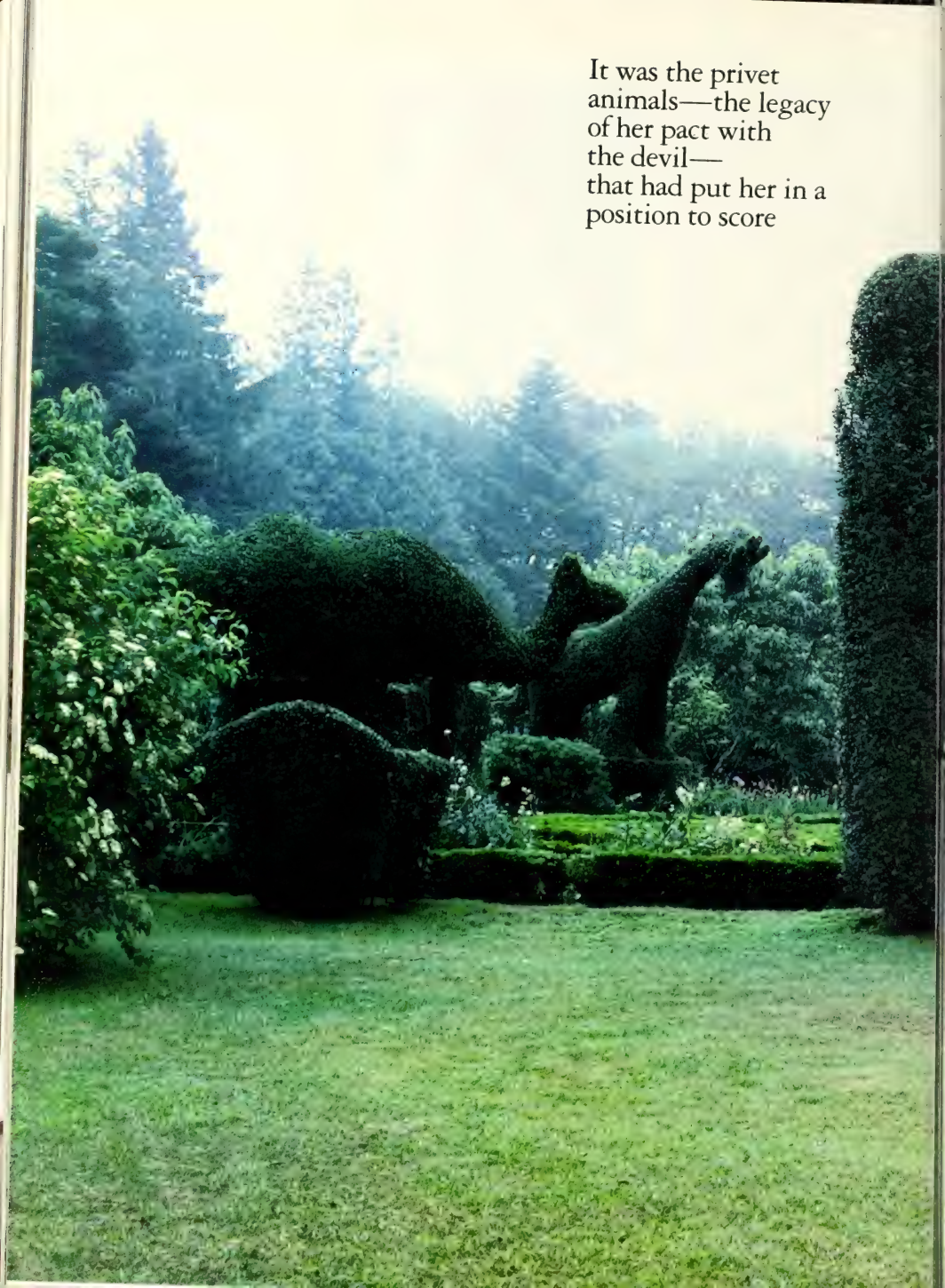


Concealed her mother's stair carpet and the Little Dorrit figure kneeling with tacks in its mouth while Father thunders, concede her the Turkish oaks of Victorian taste, but what of her claim to have run welfare for the city of Fall River during the Depression? The city was bankrupt; unemployment figures stood at 50,000—half the population; Roosevelt had not yet moved in with the CCC and PWA or perhaps he had not yet taken office. In the background was a history of strikes and labor violence. Into the crisis stepped Alice Brayton, enlisted by a desperate mayor to run a relief program. It was not clear how the city happened to turn to her. She had had no previous experience; her education had stopped with Fall River High School, where they gave Greek and Latin but scarcely economics or urban administration. Yet for her, embarking on the story, apparently it went without saying that her city should have called her in its hour of need. And matter-of-factly (as she told it) she put up the money, out of her own pocket, to tide over the initial crisis. How much that amounted to she did not say—only that every cent was repaid.

I forget all the unique features of the relief plan she ran. The main outlines were that it was cheap and gave value. She cited her first decision: every man on relief should receive a pair of shoes. To ensure good quality (cheaper in the long run), she checked on where the men in her family got their shoes and ordered the same, with the choice of low shoes like her brother's or high like her father's. Next she bought shirts: every unemployed man had the choice of work shirt or dress shirt of Father's or Brother's brand. That was her picture of democracy in action—every man jack wearing Father's shoes.

For groceries she issued food stamps redeemable at the family grocer's. In fact she claimed to have invented the food-stamp idea. The mayor of a big English city—Manchester or Leeds—came to Fall River, she well remembered, to study how her methods worked. As with any public-spirited action, criticism was inevitable. But upholding her hand throughout was the Catholic bishop of Fall River—Bishop Cassidy, I think it was—who became a friend and steady admirer, figuring in more than one of her narratives.

Naturally, she was anti-bureaucratic. From a small office in City Hall she administered the program single-handed, receiving all complaints personally. And complaints were what Alice Brayton knew how to handle. She liked to tell the story of the man who objected because his groceries weren't being delivered. Your average welfare administrator would have used the rough side of his tongue on him, giving fresh grounds for complaint. Not Alice Brayton; she agreed to delivery and *outsmarted* him. *(Text continued on page 192)*



It was the privet
animals—the legacy
of her pact with
the devil—
that had put her in a
position to score













now president of her own cosmetics company, Beauty Checkers, which grew out of her "makeover" salon at Henri Bendel in New York. The jet-set opening-night life goes on for her, a pace she set as a model, an editor, a businesswoman, and as wife of a *Life* photographer with a heavy Hollywood connection. (When Marilyn Monroe ran away from her movie studio she moved into the Greenes' Connecticut house, an event immortalized in Edward R. Murrow's television visit.)

Scaled down though it is, Amy Greene's role as hostess is still a primary one in her life. Her housekeeper of some thirty years—"I introduce her as my mother"—still comes to assist, serving dinner parties in country-style white vessels in the kitchen. "I have always decorated my kitchens as carefully as my living rooms so that guests would like going there to help themselves. I serve buffet-style but I seat everyone at tables and always set out place cards; it's not fair to make guests decide where to sit. That is the hostess's job."

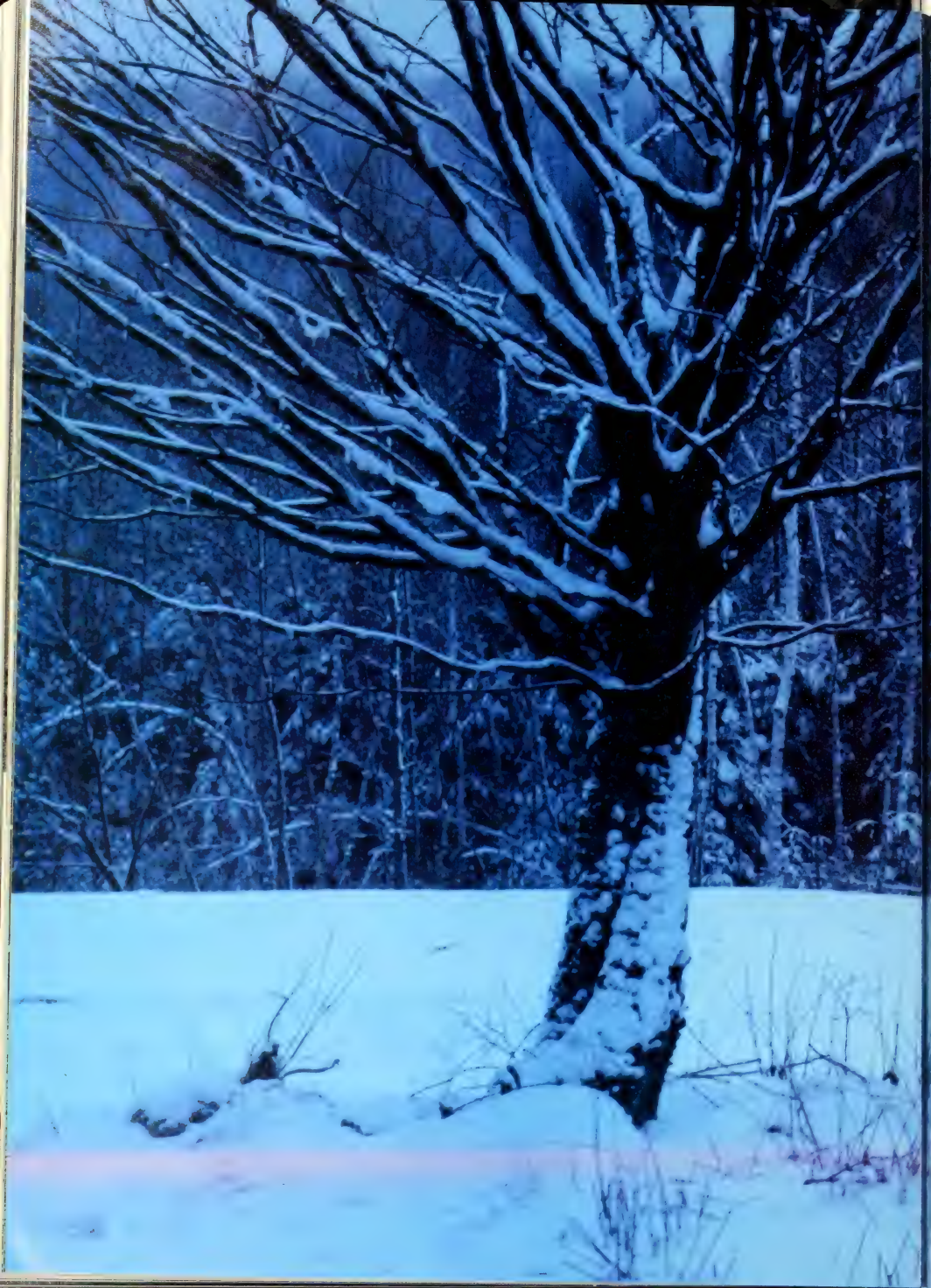
Mrs. Greene plans comforts for herself as well. She wants surroundings that are fresh, efficient, and lavish. "These qualities add up to my personal standard of prettiness. A pretty room is what I aim for, from the major elements to the tiniest detail." Storage is one of her specialties, and she arranges many of her possessions in plain view. A talent for storage is a necessity for a lifelong collector and especially one who has moved to smaller quarters.

In this, her first small apartment, Amy Greene reveled in the gloriously detailed rooms of a turn-of-the-century New York building but had to deal with uneven wall surfaces. Determined to respect the original architecture, she made no irrevocable changes and relied on mirrors to mask the imperfections. And then she made it pretty. □ *Editor: Jacqueline Gonnet*



Right: Amy Greene's bedroom is painted a face-powder peach because she wants to see something gentle and pretty the instant she opens her eyes. Her bed represents years of work for one Guatemalan carver. When she found it in an antiques shop it was painted "a bilious green," so she had it stripped and waxed. The round table is for writing or dining. "I like to be able to eat in every room." *Above:* A set designer painted the bedroom chimneypiece in colors Amy Greene chose.







A roof like a nun's cap makes Bentley/LaRoche/Sakakey's design sing.

A DARING LITTLE HOUSE

BY HEATHER MacIsaac PHOTOGRAPHY BY DOROTHY [illegible]







As plantation houses speak of the graciousness of Southerners, so the latest house by the New York firm of Bentley/LaRosa/Salasky Design evokes the legendary character of the down-easter—hearty and nonsense, but not without an idiosyncratic charm. Locals in this rural part of Maine have dubbed the addition to their community "the flying nun house," "the origami house," and even "the house with the funny roof." Not without reason—the winged roof rising from front to back does prompt smiles and widen eyes. But those who stop for a lingering look discover that the roof is only one of several architectural maneuvers that elevate a seemingly conventional house from the commonplace.

Reduced to its basic forms and stud-wall construction, the house is as familiar to a Maine native as common sense. With a tight budget in mind, the architects wisely adopted from the vernacular its most practical and enduring features: a simple gabled shape, partially buried ground floor, open, lofted upper floor, front and back porches,

Preceding pages: The storybook façade seen from the road. *Left:* Study/play loft is tucked snugly under the roof and open to main living area on three sides. *Above:* Deep overhang of roof shelters large windows in winter, shades them in summer.

Above: The warp of the saddleback roof serves as much to lift the rear porch (right) to a view of Hog Hill as to anchor the entrance porch (left). *Opposite:* Even in winter, the interior of the house glows, thanks to an open plan, generous south-facing windows, and natural-pine woodwork. *Below:* Western façade will one day terminate an avenue cut through the trees to a pond.

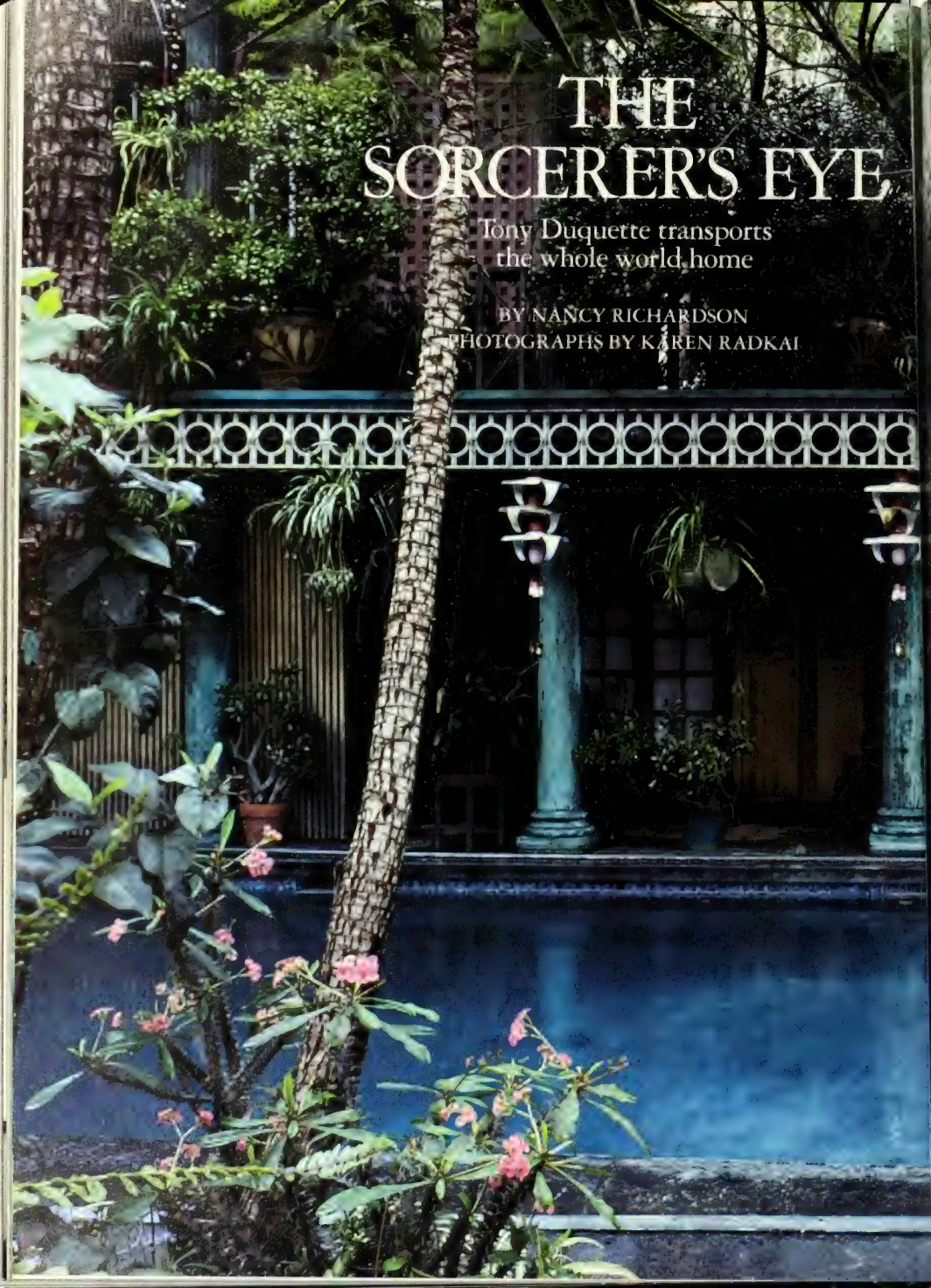


and wood detailing inside and out. Siting the house for solar efficiency and ready access to the main road duly completed the frugal Maine ethic.

There ends the conventional. The eastern façade reads like a child's drawing of "house," complete with a minimal porch, a centered door, and a brick chimney, but the roof peeks out above the gable and the windows take off in a dance of asymmetry. On the north side, the dance continues; on the south, larger windows, screened in summer by a grid of vines, begin to line up. Finally, in the west façade, formal symmetry arrives, almost; only the lower door breaks from the formation. Neatly linking these fetching faces and marking the edge of the two exterior textures is a single delicate horizontal band.

Inside, the unconventional persists; two tiny bedrooms are secreted, along with the only wood-burning stove, in the semi-buried lower level, and the loft just under the roof is reserved for family work and play. The locals are beginning to realize that the funny roof that first caught them by surprise caps 1,400 square feet of an all-too-familiar natural resource—good old Yankee ingenuity. □





THE SORCERER'S EYE

Tony Duquette transports the whole world home

BY NANCY RICHARDSON
PHOTOGRAPHS BY KAREN RADKAI





Previous pages: A view of the middle level of the garden and swimming pool. A Burmese tole parasol shades a circular stair. *Above:* Tony Duquette and his wife Elizabeth on a bridge that links a Thai-inspired garden pavilion and Mrs. Duquette's studio. The ramp is salvage from the U.S. Navy. In the foreground, two vertical iron sculptures, *Summer Sun* and *Son of Summer Sun* by Mr. Duquette. *Opposite:* On the back of the front door of the house, a trompe-l'oeil footman by Mrs. Duquette.

High up behind the Beverly Hills Hotel, where all the streets shoot off at odd angles and even local taxi drivers have to consult maps, there is a road that ends abruptly, with big earthmoving equipment parked to one side. Someone is trying to move the end of the canyon back a few hundred feet. We have passed our destination because the owner of the house has camouflaged it in the same way Europeans do for fear that the unfriendly will know that something special is going on inside. Turning back, we are suddenly at the right address. The entire length of the house fronts the street. It is covered in lattice and vines and is deceptively nondescript. We are about to call on a wizard—a wizard of playful and rich effects, an artist in many disciplines, a decorator of forty years. Will the front door be trompe l'oeil? Not at all. Tony Duquette himself comes to a very real door, and as he steps aside, the eye is drawn, as he intended all eyes to be drawn as they entered, down a few steps to a double-height room that is shady and exotic even at high noon. This is the heart and point of the house, and its rectangular shape, like that of the house itself, runs parallel to the side of the canyon on which it sits. Just beyond the high French doors of the drawing room a wooden balcony overlooks a garden that follows the canyonside as it falls away, sometimes descending steeply, sometimes punctuated by platforms and terraces. Yuccas, pines, *Pittosporum,* jade trees, full-grown eucalyptuses, a forest of bromeliads shade several acres of voluptous Oriental green set with seven pinkish pagodas and pavilions and a swimming pool. The terraces are shaded by lattice and furnished with unusual outdoor furniture from several centuries and cultures. Like a garden on a Coromandel screen, the little pavilions—one cantilevered out from the hillside—are places that frame other views.

Since the time during World War II when Elsie de Wolfe lived in Beverly Hills and pronounced young Duquette a genius, it has been hard to think of a single word to describe what he did. In the tradition of Oliver Mes-







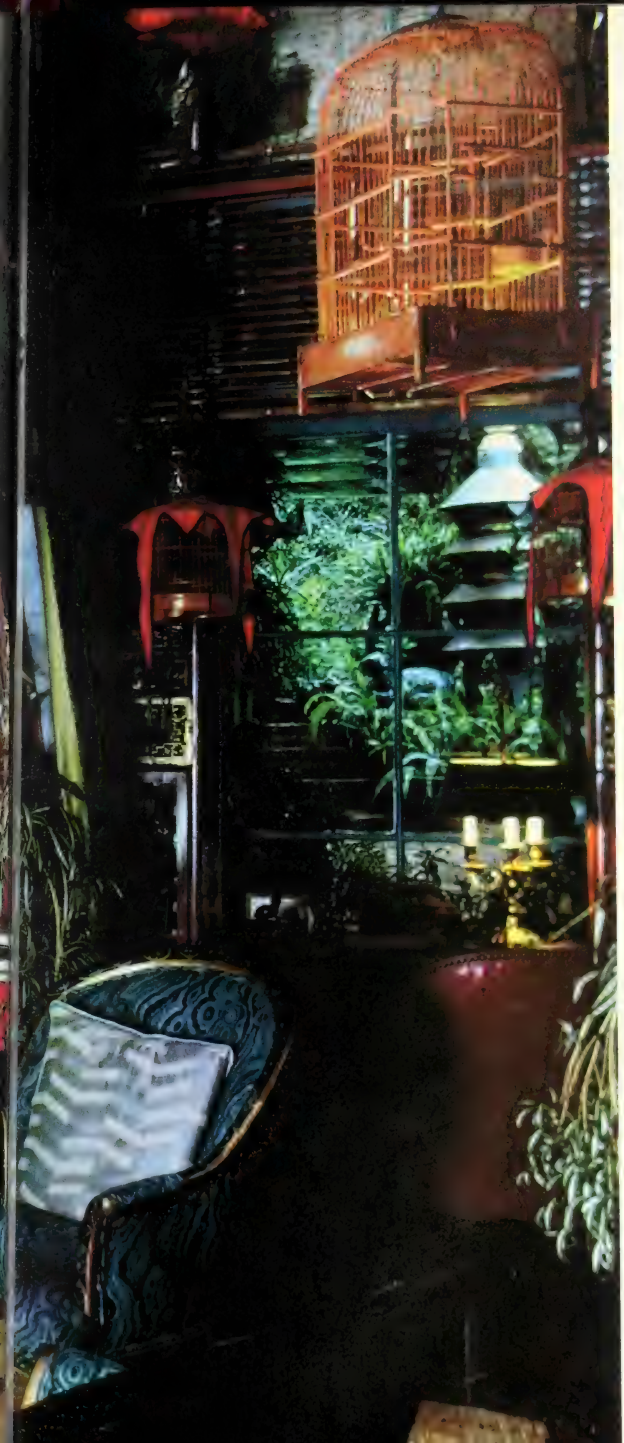
A look into the Duquettes' big drawing room from a second-floor balcony. The Venetian blown-glass chandelier is Duquette's design, as are curtain valances stiffened with glue and gesso to look like carved wood hangings. Eighteenth-century Venetian giltwood dolphins were a present to the Duquettes from Frances Elkins. On the left, African Ekoi sculpture in leather. 1830s Axminster rug, red and black lacquer furniture, European paintings hung one over the other, and pagodas of all sorts fill out the room.



Above: One end of the Duquettes' double-height sitting room. The screen was originally a scene set into a boiserie in an Italian palace. Above, a pair of architectural caprices of ruins—one showing an earthquake—hang on either side of an allegorical painting of one of the senses. Euphorbia plants sit on the low table. *Opposite:* The dining room looks into the garden on two sides. Mirrored ceiling and leopard tablecloth are inspired by Elsie de Wolfe. Duquette made the chandelier from mother-of-pearl and amethyst crystal drops.

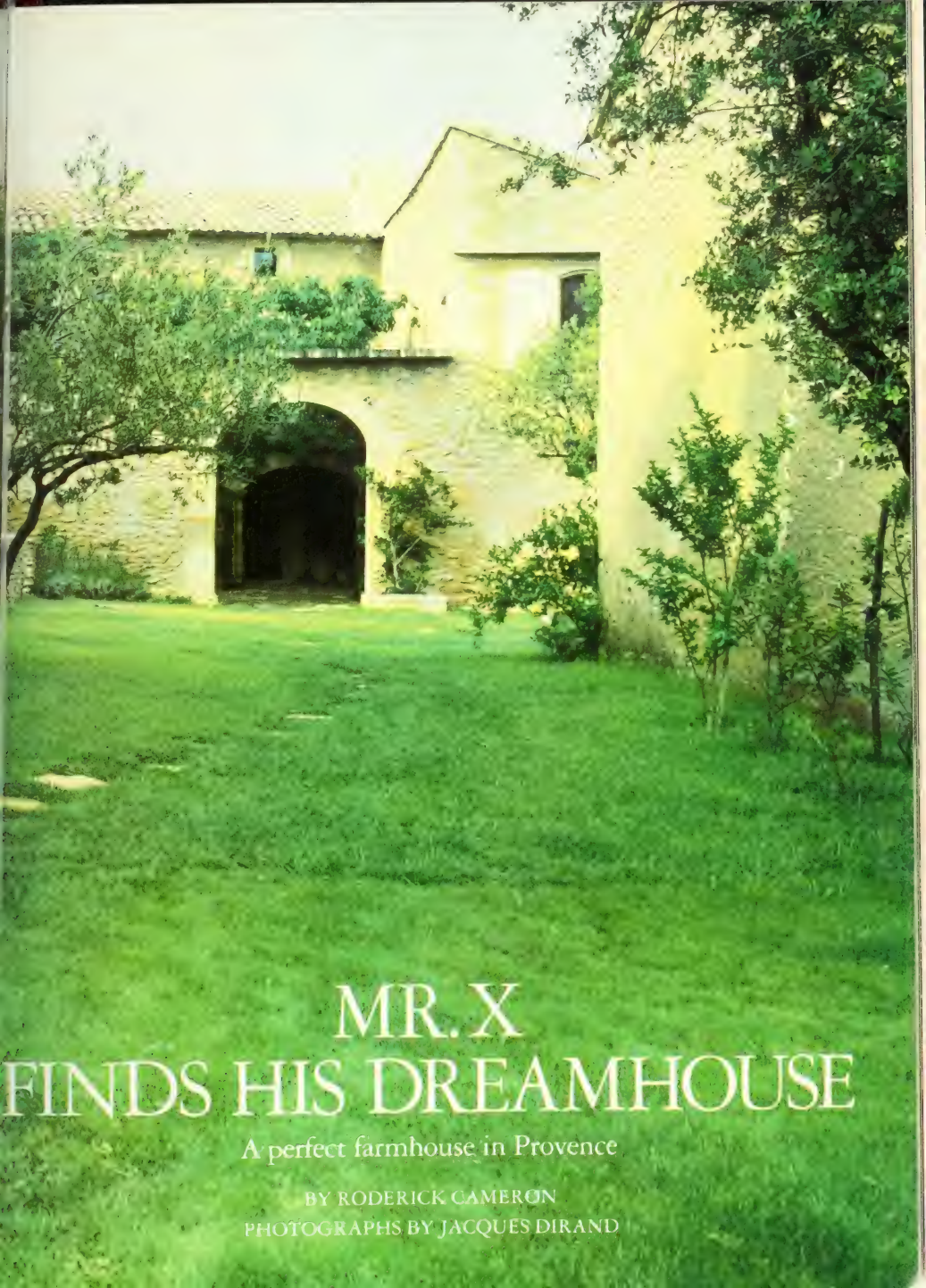






sel and Christian Bérard he has designed costumes—the ones for *Camelot* won a Tony award—and stage sets—San Franciscans saw the sets for *Der Rosenkavalier*. He worked up ballrooms and fashion shows for films in the fifties. He made jewelry for the Duchess of Windsor, Lady Mendl's friend. He also designed houses that were a baroque but unpretentious mixture of everything he had seen on his travels in Europe and the Far East. For some of his clients he built into walls and doors a collection of architectural fragments—Venetian, Burmese, Spanish, Thai, Mexican, and French—treating them as if they were found objects with which he endeavored to reinvent the architectural conventions that had produced them originally. When the job was a large hotel he designed furniture, fixtures, and fabrics and painted the murals himself. His clients were a mixture of the movie world—David O. Selznick—and old Los Angeles, as well as the very rich: Doris Duke, J. Paul Getty, Norton Simon, and Elizabeth Arden. In addition, he has always given parties that were spectacles unlike other spectacles and showed his uncanny ability to create a mood. Duquette designed a lot of furniture years ago that looked as if he understood what Jean Michel Frank was after, while doing something totally different. He has made sculpture far outside the mainstream of contemporary art, ranging from maquettes and small-scale fantasies, shown at an exhibition at the Pavillon de Marsan at the Louvre in 1952, to skeletal metal angels 28 feet high, which will be on view at the California Museum of Science and Industry in Los Angeles until mid-February. Every ten years a new generation "discovers" him. All the themes that have appeared in his work over the years have come together in the house where he and his wife, the painter Elizabeth Johnstone, now live. It is their first house, and they designed it together in 1949 *(Text continued on page 196D)*

The Duquettes' summer bedroom. The alcove for the bed is fitted out as a palace tent in the Chinese taste. Tassels, embroidered silk panels from China, real and faux animal skins, and malachite pattern printed on cotton are the elements of a rich, colorful room that provide Tony Duquette with something to look at even when he is in bed.



MR. X FINDS HIS DREAMHOUSE

A perfect farmhouse in Provence

BY RODERICK CAMERON

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JACQUES DIRAND





Above: Detail of the courtyard arranged with pots of oranges, lemons, and white oleander. A specially made bamboo cage hangs against the wall under the shade of a cherry tree and houses cooing doves. *Opposite:* A corner of the drawing room showing the Louis XV fireplace found in a housewrecker's yard in a nearby town. The wood basket comes from England and was made by the apple pickers of Norfolk. The walls are washed in a suggestion of green, which took the painter three tries to get faint enough The quick impression of the Taj Mahal over the fireplace dates from about 1870. *Overleaf left:* One of the plate-glass doors cleverly installed by the architect gives just the right contemporary touch. *Overleaf right:* Before working their fields, farmers in Provence have to clear them of the flat slabs of limestone with which they are strewn. Here a wall of slabs is finished off in a sandwich pattern typical of the district

This is New York calling. Are you Mr. Cameron?" and then a man's voice on the telephone, a civilized voice. Mr. X announces himself and he turns out to be a well-known American publisher. I didn't actually know him, but friends had told him to contact me. "Mr. Cameron"—and this said with the faintest trace of a WASP accent—"I have just bought a property near you," and then the briefest hesitation. "Do you know of anybody who would do it up for me?" Hesitation then on my part. "Why yes. . . ." And then obviously having gathered up his courage Mr. X comes out with it: "Would you consider doing it yourself? I understand the property is very near you. Go and look at it and tell me what you think." And then with amusement, "It's almost a ruin."

One can tell a lot from a voice on the telephone and Mr. X sounded like a nice person, added to which the proposition was a flattering one, and of course I accepted. Mr. X said he would call again the next morning after I had seen the place. No sleeping dogs here, I thought, and how right I turned out to be.

The house proved to be anything but a ruin and Hugues Galante, the architect responsible for the restorations, met me and showed me around. Young and efficient, a native of the country, he understood and respected the local building traditions—how one wishes more people of his calling had the same qualities—and what alterations there were had been made with tact. In fact it was difficult to see exactly where changes had occurred.

Lost at the end of a long dirt road, the house sits on a spur of a large plateau with a magnificent view over wooded hills with not another building in sight. It is a smallish house and its rooms are of no great consequence, but what it lacks in space it makes up for in charm. Its walls are of honey-colored stone and there is an arched courtyard, the roof being composed of old weathered tiles that have taken on all the hues of an overripe melon. One falls for the place immediately. It has struck me before how well-planned this type of eighteenth-century Provençal farmhouse can be. Small rooms they are, but generally more of them than one would have expected, judging from the compact exterior. Le Mas Daumas (for that is its name) has five bedrooms, three bathrooms, two sitting rooms, a study, a kitchen, and a long room too narrow to serve as anything but a dining room. M. Galante has installed plate-glass windows in brass frames, just the right contemporary touch, and in certain places he has sunk the foundations and opened some extra windows to let in more light. An outhouse serves as a lodging for the guardians and a Hansel-and-Gretel pavilion houses the laundry. For a short while I was *(Text continued on page 224)*







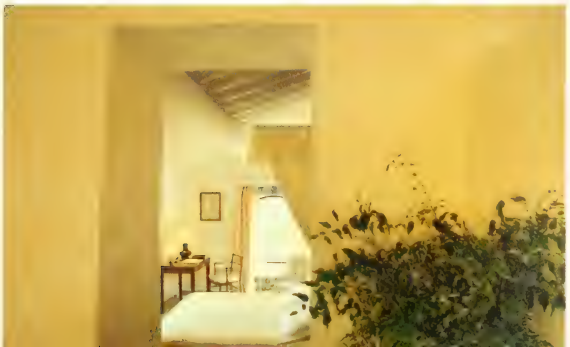
In the small sitting room, which sets the mood of the house, an Austrian wooden owl presides over the David Hicks drinks table. A Jesuit father, working for the Emperor of China in the eighteenth century, painted the portrait of a white dog.



"My wife and I hate dark furniture. I have been told you make everything white." "Well, not quite," I answered. "That's all right, that's fine with me. Everything is to be very simple, with no really good pieces of furniture. You understand?"



Above left: The soup tureen on the dining-room table is part of a set of green faïence made by La Poterie Provençal at Biot, and the two faïence melons are by Anne Gordon. The small sideboard is nineteenth-century Sienese and was highly painted in arabesques before being stripped—shades of Syrie Maugham!
Above: The kitchen is hung with every possible provençal herb
Below left: In one of the guest rooms a brass bed is hung with a pretty new chintz from Seckers Fabricks in London. Part of a collection of mid-nineteenth-century French wallpapers, a dog in a marbelized frame hangs over a pine chest and some of Simone Favier's Moustiers faïence.
Below: A view of the X's bedroom. The pen-and-ink drawing over the little Louis XVI desk by Thomas Mabie is of a delicious quality and comes certainly from a portfolio of botanical studies worked in the Orient





The swimming pool, blasted out of solid rock, is lined in ordinary cement so that the water does not shine a hard blue in the olive-colored landscape. Four large pale terra-cotta pots planted with clumps of spiky *Chamaerops*—the only palm indigenous in Europe—stand round the border.

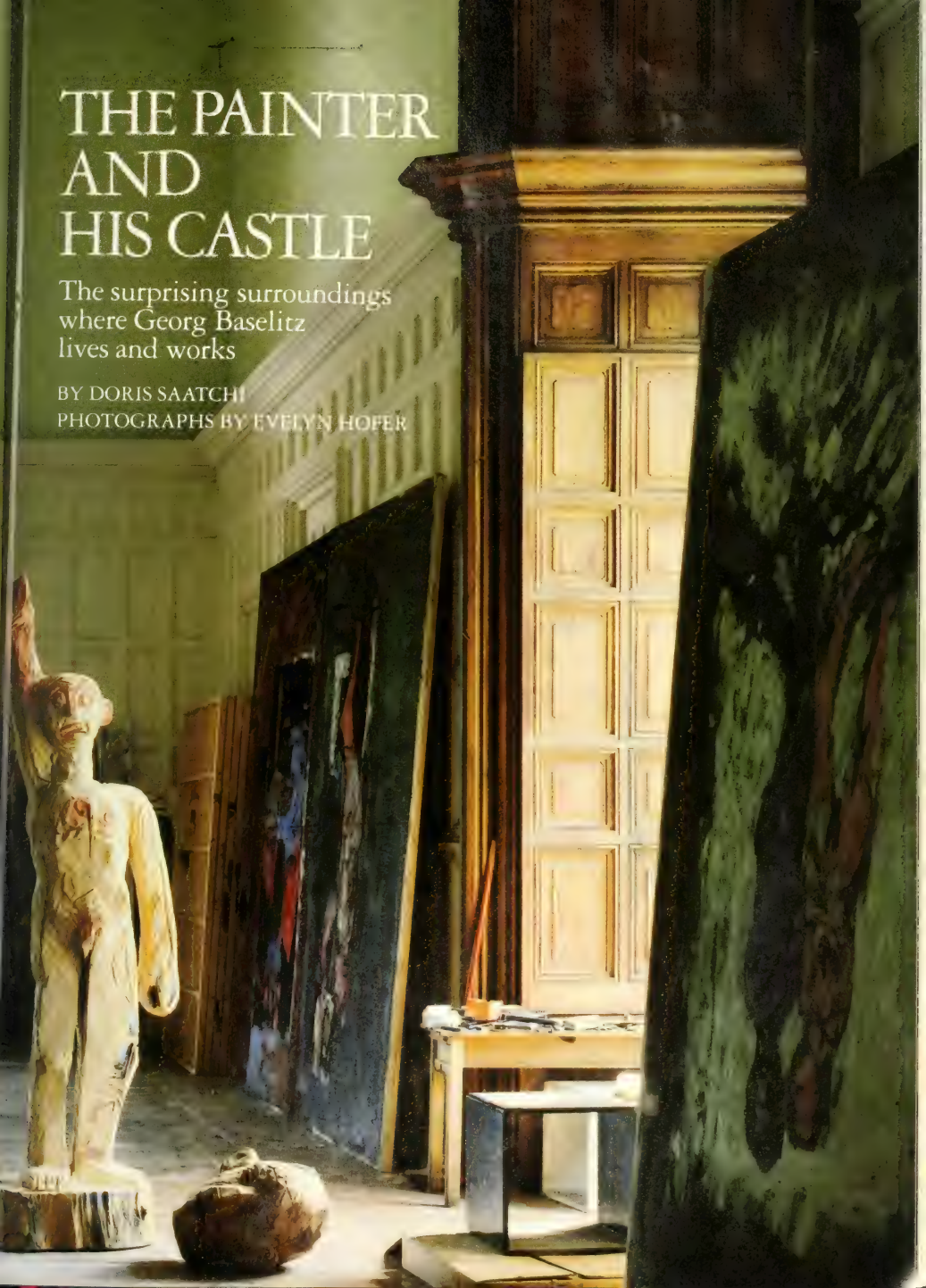




THE PAINTER AND HIS CASTLE

The surprising surroundings where Georg Baselitz lives and works

BY DORIS SAATCHI
PHOTOGRAPHS BY EVELYN HOFER





Once upon a time, not so very long ago, in a part of West Germany known as Lower Saxony, a prince of art and his fair wife happened upon a wonderful old castle. With its gravel-covered courtyard and crenelated clock tower, its clanging iron entrance gates, stained-glass windows, and massive wooden doors, it was everything a castle should be. As a place for living, it was also big and rambling and expensive to maintain and not just a little forbidding. So one day the Count of Münster, whose family had owned the castle since the king of England gave it to his great-great-great grandfather at the Congress of Vienna, decided to sell it and move to a centrally-heated Swiss chalet. And that is how Georg and Elke Baselitz, their young sons, Daniel and Anton, and Elke's mother, Frau Franzke, came to make the Castle of Derneberg their home.

On the castle's twelfth-century foundations, there once stood a church and convent, and an earthy smell of ancient stone and old bones fills what was the convent cloister and is now the castle's ground floor. The remains of the nuns and the abbots are buried there, the graves marked with faint incisions in the worn granite floor. Most of the church was torn down almost two hundred

Preceding pages: Nine years ago, the sight of the Great Hall with its astonishing space and light convinced Georg Baselitz that he had found the perfect place to live and work. *Above:* Even in his working clothes Baselitz seems at home in his princely surroundings. *Right:* A sheep's-eye view takes in the remaining part of the church that once existed on the site.







Left: Visitors come frequently to Dernberg Castle seeking Baselitz's latest work. One of his recent still lifes of tulips hangs above a venerable inlaid chest. *This page:* This head is one of only seven that Baselitz recently sculpted from linden and beechwood. He has kept this blue-faced version for his own collection.







Left: Alterations to the palatial entrance hall by various Counts of Münster include the inset family coat of arms and the neo-Gothic doorway to the living area. *Above:* The marble floor in the dining room was added in the thirties. Georg and Elke added the thirties dining table and chairs. *Overleaf:* Two views of the music room: when seated at her piano, Elke Baselitz is surrounded by paintings, furniture, and objects spanning almost five centuries. Among them, the two remarkable chairs, left, made in Florence around 1860 by Frullini and bought at a London auction.

years ago and its only remains are the castle's entrance foyer and the great hall above.

Inside this former bastion of aristocracy, Elke and Georg Baselitz, who began their married life in a one-room apartment in Berlin, have done away with hierarchies. In the awesome entrance foyer, under the stern marble gaze of a bewhiskered Count of Münster, a pair of yellow rubber boots and a walking stick are poised for bad weather at the foot of the stone staircase. Chunky, metal-studded leather dog collars hang from a simple wooden hat rack, warning visitors that there are monsters in the place. A motorbike for quick trips to the local village is propped against a wall. On a paneled marble plinth next to an arched door to the living area there is a tattered silk standard that looks as if it were once carried into battle by a Münster minion, while its homely doppelgänger, a spindly pole with a paddle attached to its end, stands in the opposite corner. This awkward implement, which Germans call an "owl," is particularly useful in a castle, as it can reach up to otherwise inaccessible places in order to wipe away cobwebs.

Above the foyer is the great hall, a space about 2,200 feet square and forty feet high, where Baselitz makes his unsettling art. Portraits of the Münster family that lined the vast walls here are gone now, their serene and elegant faces replaced by wild-eyed, gawky creatures that stare upside down out of Baselitz's vast canvases and loom larger than life in his rough-hewn wood sculptures. Baselitz's work is widely sought after and most of these figures go out into the world as soon as they are born.

There are among this extraordinary throng of souls and spirits some even more *(Text continued on page 190)*







African carvings, Mannerist prints, and books about furniture and art line a corridor.

(Continued from page 187) surprising residents, the African carved figures, mostly from the Bateke tribe, that Baselitz incessantly accumulates. There are fetishes and idols, masks and dolls, burial figures and drums. They line up in rows on showcase shelves or stand singly in corridors. A pot-bellied pygmy gazes at a wall of books with texts in German, English, French, Italian, and Russian. A ghostly giant stares into the music room toward the grand piano, one knee bent as if he is about to enter. Baselitz first became interested in these figures six years ago when he came across some Cameroon carvings in a Munich gallery. He explains that he collects them because he likes them, because they give him "a feeling of peace." They also provoke him to consider the difference between the art tradition that produced them and his own work. What he finds particularly interesting is their continuity. In the Western art tradition, according to Baselitz, everything is preserved, so the artist must destroy what has gone before to create meaningful new art. "My paintings are only worth making if they add something to what already exists," he states. In the African cultures, the figures are used. They get lost, wear out, or "lose their magic," so the archetypes are preserved and carried on from generation to generation, from artist to artist. Though these pieces are anonymous, Baselitz is convinced that they are artworks with the same importance as those he makes and those works by friends and kindred spirits that hang on his walls: paintings by Immendorff, Polke, Fautrier, Vedova, Lüpertz, Picabia; watercolors, drawings, and gouaches by Kiefer, Penck, Kirkeby; Mannerist prints.

He does not consider the furniture and objects a collection. "I choose things because they are lively. I am interested in historical relationships, not interiors as such." Derneberg Castle abounds in these relationships. In a passageway the ornately carved doors of two dark sixteenth-century cupboards open to reveal Elke's brightly patterned collection of modern clothes. A white Baroque tile stove stands next to a display of colorful Jugendstil china. A gilt settee covered in striped silk sits beside a chrome and cane Mies van der Rohe chair. In the same room, a Venetian glass chandelier hangs from a starry ceiling. The stars were Elke's idea, a Christmas fantasy. Georg, whose paintings are exhibited in many of the world's major museums, drew the stencils and with Daniel and Anton daubed them onto a midnight-blue background. Elsewhere, there are Empire chairs and Rietveld chairs. Art Deco lamps and eighteenth-century candlesticks. Persian carpets and zebra-skin rugs. Box-patterned parquet floors, pale gray marble floors, and wide-plank floors as glossy and golden as butterscotch sauce. It is possible to consider that in making their unique environment Elke and Georg Baselitz have in fact added something new to what existed before and, by Georg's own definition, have created a work of art. Georg denies it.

"I am merely trying to make my surroundings beautiful, to isolate myself from ugliness."

As he speaks, the bell in the clock tower strikes noon, while inside the tower the clock's rusty innards turn with a muffled, sonorous tick, described by Baselitz as the "heartbeat of the house." Then the thundering of the fearsome household guards, two huge black Neapolitan mastiffs named Cosimo and Massimo, signals that there is a visitor. As usual, lunch will be served in the white-washed, rough-walled kitchen, where, on a stainless steel covered console, Elke Baselitz fills huge plates with pickled herring, paper-thin slices of prosciutto, crescents of melon, and tomato. Frequently there are fresh Italian cheeses brought back from the holiday house in Tuscany, always there is plenty of Rhine wine and lots of talk, often in several languages. When lunch is over, it's back to work. Then later in the afternoon there will be tea and coffee on a balcony overlooking the carp pond and a giant copper beech tree, or in the dining room with a jovial, carved wood couple from the Babembe tribe around a thirties French table. At the end of the day, the family often gathers in a room that the various Counts of Münster probably referred to as the "salon," where, in front of the fireplace, Elke has arranged thoroughly traditional and enormously comfortable sofas and matching chairs.

In a castle, the work of keeping house is never done, and the Castle of Derneberg, like every castle, has its "housemaster." Throughout the day he goes about his tasks, rarely seen or heard. Under the cloister's vaulted ceiling, he sweeps up a foot-deep pile of wood shavings where, coaxed by Baselitz's chisel, a figure is emerging from a massive tree trunk. He trims and tends the geraniums, agaves, roses, and palms in the courtyard. He oils the rust off a thick iron hinge. He fills the drinking bowls of Massimo and Cosimo with fresh water for the night. Finally, he goes to the tower and slowly turns the crank that winds the great clock to insure that, whatever else may happen, the beat of life in the Castle of Derneberg will continue.

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Possibly Christmas brought out an ambivalent imp in Miss Brayton. The giving of gifts was a provocation to naughtiness

*(Continued from page 143)*She hired a boy to follow the complainer from the office and observe his goings and comings. That done, the same little boy was detailed to wait in a doorway opposite the man's house till he had gone out for the day, then quickly deliver the bags of food to his doorstep, making sure to leave them in the sun. Soon the man was back in Miss Brayton's office asking to have the special service discontinued. . . .

The anecdote, of course, is a story against the poor, of the classical coal-in-the-bathtub type but with retribution added. Miss Brayton was a prankish moralist. Most of the fables she related of human wickedness showed people getting what they asked for, in perfect justice. The Christmas party she gave every year was a neat illustration of a morality play. Neighbors and relatives, old and young, arriving by tradition in mid-morning, found the tall spruce tree by the back door hung with brightly wrapped presents and beside it in the snow little Miss Brayton, wearing a hat and muffler and stamping her feet to keep warm. There were no names on the presents, and when you began to unwrap the one she had pulled down for you, you knew—or if it was your first time somebody explained—that what you got now didn't matter, you would be able to exchange it inside. That was the point of this Christmas.

Inside, in the dining room, the long table had been converted into an exchange, and the guests, having taken off their outdoor things and been given a glass of hot mulled wine and a biscuit, circled slowly around the table, on which were laid out bolts of tweed and silk, cars and tracks for electric trains, paint boxes, gloves, golf balls, scarves, sweaters, stockings, bottles of sherry and claret, flower vases, books, games, perhaps a chess set of little ivory men, delicate batiste place mats, a French cheese, a piece of old lace. . . . Some years there was a lazy Susan in the middle to hold more presents, and once a whole electric train was whirring around on a sort of trestle. You turned in your door-present and chose from the table the thing you wanted most. Some chose fast and some kept circling, undecided, fingering, looking at a label.

The exchange was a character test. Whatever you took, or failed to take, you gave yourself away. Children, inclined to grab without second thoughts, came off better than their elders, inhibited by an awareness of our hostess's watching eyes. But there was one year when a ferrety youth earned, I thought, Miss Brayton's eternal contempt (not to mention that of his brothers and sister) by picking *something for his mother, to help her in her cooking,* rather than the top or kite his natural heart should have craved.

The table was full of traps for hypocrites. One year she set out her bait almost too crudely. A single small flower—let's say an unseasonal hyacinth—stood in a small container between a large box of Louis Sherry chocolates and a Nuits St. Georges. "Food for the soul," Miss Brayton, behind us like a tempter, could not forbear hinting. Whereupon the silly man next to me in line leapt forward with abandon to claim the *spiritual* remembrance.



Head gardener George Mendonça has been at Green Animals 44 years.

As usual, that year I picked the most expensive thing on the table. Those traps of hers held no terror for me. Being a hypocrite about my wants was never one of my faults. Hence I greatly enjoyed those Christmas mornings, though for some of her guests (and I fear she intended it) they must have been quite an ordeal. To covetous children who, intoxicated by the display, chafed at being limited to *one* present, to adults who felt they had taken a present that was much too big or else not big enough, the exchange "taught a lesson," and "learning your lesson" was maybe not in the Christmas spirit. Was it our Redeemer or our Judge whose birth we were celebrating?

Possibly Christmas brought out an ambivalent imp in Miss Brayton. The giving of gifts was a provocation to naughtiness. With many generous people, the pleasures of bestowing have their counterpart in the joy of withholding, or at any rate in a barely controllable reluctance to part with something one has. The coexistence of the two in Miss Brayton was never more marked than in her Christmas-morning reception of the monks from the Priory across Cory's Lane. Every year an invitation went out, though relations were never what they had been with Bishop Cassidy of Fall River and were strained almost to the breaking point sometimes by a boundary dispute. But Christmas was Christmas, and the monks always came—last, after the guests had gone and after the servants had received their gifts.

The once-groaning exchange table must have been down to the hard-core remains when the Prior, by appointment, knocked. There were never witnesses to what happened next, but doubtless it varied from year to year. Sometimes it *(Continued on page 194)*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY SANDRA IVAY



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*(Continued from page 192)*seems to have been a decidedly convivial party. Then there was the dreadful time referred to only in reminiscence: "Yes [musing], that was the year I gave the Father Prior bubble bath." Often, I suspect, the exchange table procedure was followed normally, though with diminished stocks. But I remember hearing of a time that was still close to the telling when she was boasting of it, like a bantam cock. That was the wicked Christmas when the monks were shown to a sumptuously laden table: wines and cordials, fruit pastes, cheeses, liqueur chocolates, Turkish delight, nuts—everything calculated to speak to the Friar Tuck in a "black" Benedictine. Then, after allowing the poor men a full minute of contemplation, she barked, "Well, you're monks, aren't you? You've renounced all that," and marched them out of the room. And there was another year, I think, when in the same spirit she gave them all *books*. Religious books, irreligious books, books on the Index, the story did not specify. But they might have been books written by herself and published at her own expense.

Rather surprisingly, Miss Brayton was an author, an historian, and not a bad one. Her books—*George Berkeley in Apulia, George Berkeley in Newport, Scrabbletown*—were handsomely produced, well-written, and carefully proofread. She is thought to have got her start as a garden-club chronicler. She had been attracted to the idealist philosopher for the obvious reason that he had spent three years in a house called Whitehall, in Middletown, near Newport and the rocks called Purgatory and Paradise. But I am not sure to what extent she had looked into his philosophical writings. After Bishop Berkeley came *Scrabbletown,* a biting analysis of records found in a trunk in a Massachusetts town between Fall River and New Bedford; this is the most personal and the best, in my view, of her books. There were the makings of an intellectual in Miss Brayton, I always thought. That she did not use her mind more fully, direct it to more interesting ends, was her own doing and represented a choice in life.



The Turkish oaks Miss Brayton said she grew from two acorns.

It must have had to do with "Father." During my years in Portsmouth, it was my firm conviction that she had made a devil's pact with him. It partly concerned the house. She wanted the house and garden, and in order to get them she had to wed herself to him, stay with him, turning into a spinster, while her sisters left home (one went to Bryn Mawr) and made their own lives. She loved her mother and she may have put it to herself that she stayed to protect her, interpose her small figure between her and the tyrant, fight her battles for her, including the Battle of the Stair Carpet.

But her mother died, and Alice stayed on with him, doubtless thinking that, having made the loving sacrifice, now at least she should get the good out of it—the house and old Joe's topiary. There must have been a large share of the money, too, to judge by her *train de vie*—winters at the Colony Club, a well-paid pair of nice servants, Joe and Bertha (Bertha must have been French Canadian but Miss Brayton called her French, pretending that that was why she cooked so well), gardener and gardener's helpers, the cost of publishing her books, donations to the Preservation Society, membership in Bailey's Beach, furs, and couturier clothes from Bergdorf. She had the usual charities and subscriptions of a society woman. Yet the strange thing was that when you saw her, winters, in New York in her long mink coat and smart small gray hat on her way to a wedding or a matinée, she looked like an old rural body—liver-spotted hands under the white gloves, weathered cheeks, strawy white disobedient hair rearing up beneath the hat brim. Toil had left its signature on her.

She emphatically did not belong, and much of that emphasis was her own. She capitalized on her homely traits, on the Scrabbletown in her. The Lizzie Borden connection, for instance, which must once have been an embarrassment. Now she plumed herself on it; someone had sent her a record that she delighted in putting on the phonograph: "Oh, you *can't* cut your *moth*er *up* in *Massachu*setts, *Not* even if it's done as a *surprise*" She was proud of her Yankee cunning. In dealing with the New York maids at the Colony Club, she boasted, she always got her room made up before anyone else's; that was simply because she always left her door ajar and an open box of chocolates on her dresser ("Never fails to lure 'em"). Her laconic wit put you in mind of a sharp rustic having the last word.

My favorite illustration of that is a true story that took place in Portsmouth one Sunday morning when I brought an old White Russian, Serge Cheremetev, to see her and her garden. Both of these old people were what they claimed to be—he was a former governor of Galicia under the Czar, his uncle invented Boeuf Stroganoff—yet there was something spurious somewhere about both of them, and each felt it in the other. Ignoring her topiary, Cheremetev, dressed in an ancient suit of coffee-colored silk and carrying a stick, began to talk of the roses on his former estate in Grasse; she countered with a terse dismissal of roses, having only a few "pernettys" to show. Her rows of espaliered fruit trees, so exciting at the time to Americans, said little to him. Nor, naturally, did her gourds. If he tapped her Sensitive Plant lightly with his cane, he did not stay to witness the quivering response. I thought I was going to die for both of them: she was boasting more than usual; in his hoarse

rasping voice, a repeated "honored lady" crackled like gunfire.

Since things were not going well in the garden, I suggested that she show him the house. He glanced at the library, somewhat overstocked with detective stories that lined the walls of the billiard room; he was a rare-book dealer in Washington and she was a member of the Hroswitha Society, but no common chord was struck. In the front parlor, he peered at a Piranesi on the wall. Just below it on a table stood a small bronze statue that echoed a detail in the engraving; the arrangement was one of Miss Brayton's witty visual puns, and underneath the statue or beside it was a rare edition of Piranesi plates—I forget which—that had belonged to the Czar. Cheremetev, by invitation, examined the flyleaf, which stated in the imperial handwriting that the book had been the property of Nicholas II of Russia. "Ah, dear lady," he croaked, "I see you have the book of my godfather, the Czar." Miss Brayton started, as if for once taken aback; her blue eyes took in her dark-eyed visitor with his Tartar cheekbones. Then she let out a sort of cackle: "You've got the blood. I've got the book," Mr. Cheremetev bowed. She had won. Yet if I had had only her word for the story, I would not have believed it.

She had come a long way up from the cotton mills to be able to meet the Czar's godson in single combat in her front parlor, and he of course had come a long way down. On her side, it was the privet animals—the legacy of her pact with the devil—that had put her in a position to score. First of all, they had put her on the social map, marked Cory's Lane as an outlying bastion of Newport, which was still *the* society to get into while the summer lasted. But first Father had to die for her to emerge as a debutante on the Newport scene. That happened in 1939. She was 61 years old.

Despite the late start, when I met her ten years later, she had made it. Her social strategy, as carefully worked out as a Napoleonic battle plan, was based on reaching the child that she counted on finding in every Newport dowager and tycoon. *(Continued on page 196)*

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*(Continued from page 195)*After Father was gone, she started giving her lawn parties, featuring a big rented merry-go-round near the gate by the Priory side and a clambake on the beach below the railroad tracks, with well-stocked bars dotted about in between. These parties were an instant success; old-time leaders like the Misses Wetmore were teetering down the slope in their heels and long dresses to view the oddity of the clambake.

It was the child in Miss Brayton who knew that to succeed you must make a party an adventure or a treat. Even an ordinary afternoon visit to her garden, ending with a tray of strong martinis, obeyed a canonical rule of children's parties: each guest must get a present to take home. In the summer it was flowers from the garden, which she picked as you walked along and unexpectedly handed you on the front porch as you left, or fruit (her white clingstone peaches, a variety no longer to be found in catalogues, a basket of figs, or her slipskin grapes, Delaware or Catawba). Then—aside from the clipped animal and geometric figures, appealing to the scissors artist in all of us—she had funny plants like that Sensitive Plant, which quails when you strike it, carnivores like the flycatcher and pitcher plant, freaks like the parrot tulip (new then), and the tropical-looking bamboo.

With these arts and wiles, she swiftly conquered the territory she had designs on, designs perhaps dating back to her first visit to Bellevue Avenue with the Fall River or Tiverton Garden Club, where the bug may have originally bitten her—why not in Mrs. Arthur Curtiss James's blue garden? Yet she had got her start as a writer, too, in the Garden Club Bulletin. Following on that, though not too swiftly, Father's death had had a double effect, opening the gate of ivory as well as the gate of horn. It had not only set her free to pursue her social ambition. It was what had allowed her to become an author. The first of her Berkeley books, *George Berkeley in Apulia,* came out in 1946; Thomas Brayton had been dead seven years, some of which she must have used for travel and self-education. After that came *George Berkeley in Newport* (1954) and after that *Scrabbletown,* which peculiarly has no date but which I know came out toward the end of my years on Union Street—1949–54. Following that, her publications were of less interest, probably because she was no longer interested herself. Two paths had been opened up to her by her father's death and, though she may not have thought so, they were divergent. She could not take both even if suddenly having so much more money seemed to promise it. She chose society—the Chilton Club, the Colony, opera seats, Joe's chauffeur's uniforms.



Miss Brayton's house on Naragansett Bay, bought by her father in 1872.

She could not have maintained "Green Animals" and herself in the Bellevue Avenue orbit and continued to be a scholarly historian with a lively pen for the simple reason that she had run out of local material—after Berkeley, what? There were only Governor Arnold's burying-ground and the so-called Viking tower. If she was determined to stay put at the place where she had arrived, she could not move on mentally. That she should become a *social* historian in the line of Henry James and Edith Wharton was out of the question. To do that would have required a real break, and probably she could not do that because she had stayed with Father too long, bargaining for freedom. Who sups with the devil must bring a long spoon.

Though she claimed off and on to be a Quaker I think she had no particular religion. She was a natural rebel (that was the great thing about her), naturally independent in her views, and what she worshipped was a kind of intelligence that, given her self-imposed limitations, had to be visual and aesthetic. Once I heard her enunciate almost fiercely the principle she lived for, standing by her mantelpiece, chin out, like one willing to be counted. "*Taste!*" she cried, virtually shouting. "T-A-S-T-E." She spelled it out as if we might fail to understand her and then struck her small chest. "I have it. T-A-S-T-E." She stared at us all belligerently. "Yes, Miss Brayton. Of course you have." We laughed. "Obviously you have." The proof was all around us, in the flames leaping in the fireplace, in the shaker of unbeatable martinis, in the sandwiches of thin-cut soft white bread, thick white meat of chicken, and "Bertha's mayonnaise." But it was tasteless of her to say so. Once the word was pronounced, you had lost the thing it was meant to designate: an eye, an ear. It was embarrassing and sad, as if poor little Psyche had spilled the hot wax of her taper on a sleeping Cupid. Wishing she wouldn't, we hastily left.

She was 94 when she died in 1972, leaving "Green Animals" to The Preservation Society of Newport County. I was no longer living in the U.S. and had not seen her or had news of her for more than ten years. Her relatives, probably forgetting about me or thinking I would not be interested, did not send me an announcement of decease or an obituary notice from the paper. But I see from *The Great Public Gardens of the Eastern United States* that she left no endowment and the garden depends for its maintenance on gate receipts and profits from the gift shop. Does this mean she was living on capital at the end, like the grasshopper in the fable? Or expressing in that spare legacy her Yankee faith—the self-help principle applied to gardens? Somehow the end and final secret of her story must lie laconically in the willing of her property. If she intended "to live on," she may have hoped to be planted, warts and all, like a tiny rugged Turkish acorn up by the lily pool and turn into an indomitable tree. □


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The Charleston Manor tall case clock employs the finest elements of 18th century furniture design. Lavish use of hand beveled glass, rare matched mahogany veneers, elaborate carvings and a painstaking hand-rubbed finish distinguish this clock from all others.
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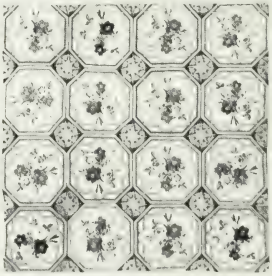


"Whistling Boy" by Vladimir Makovsky (1846-1920)
Oil on board. 15⅛" x 9⅞", signed and dated 1898.

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A Nineteenth Century English Needlework carpet, measuring 9.10 by 9.9, where floral bouquets are placed in squares. The dominant colors are cream, royal blue, green and red.

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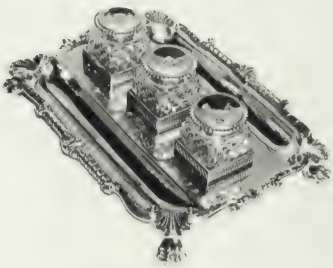


A rare 18th Century English burl amboyna cylindrical ladies writing table, Circa 1790.

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George III Period Silver Inkstand
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Dimensions: 10½" x 8½"

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A classical pier table
by Charles Honore Lannuier
influenced by the French Directoire.
Carrara marble top, columns and pilasters,
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Unusual Louis XVI Mahogany,
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Tric Trac Table:
inlaid with ivory;
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A bronze French Restoration clock, which won the silver medal at the Exposition in Paris of 1823.
Height: 26"

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Large Three Color
Biscuit Porcelain Fu Dog,
Of the K'ang Hsi period,
A.D. 1662-1722
Height: 14¼ inches

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Fine mid-Eighteenth Century
English brass chandelier
with 6 S scroll arms.
Width 32" Height 30"

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Louis XV Lady's Desk
With floral marquetry
and ormolu mounts
French, c. 1750
Height: 30⅛ inches
Width: 28½ inches
Depth: 16¾ inches

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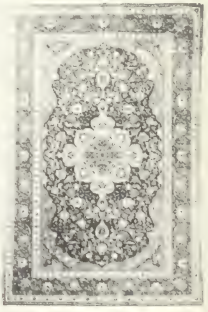


Important George I
burr walnut bureau bookcase
of superlative quality
and having an
extensively fitted interior.
England Circa 1720
Hgt. 7'4" Width 39" Depth 23"

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Semi-Antique Kashan
4.6 x 6.9
Center medallion of cream,
accented in bright orange
Dijon mustard,
and deep blue-pink
extends into a navy field
bordered in burgundy.

(Continued from page 167) when they were married. It has been rented on and off. Two years ago they moved in again and began the most ambitious city garden they have ever made.

Tony Duquette has always loved pagodas or anything with a pagoda shape. Both in the house and garden he has rare Chinese, Burmese, and Japanese pagodas in bronze, porcelain, and wood. He, however, is simply not capable of treating them with awe. When a pair of blue-and-white Regency porcelain pagodas looked too small and polite, he made a new pair four feet high and put them on a commode in the sitting room where the real ones might have looked puny. Cinnabar pagodas function as newel posts, fiberglass or "faux alabaster" pagodas made garden lights. Narwhal tusks—elongated and triangular—echo the pagoda shape as do the large Gothick finials on the main pavilion in the garden. Sometimes people who aren't afraid to create the fantasies they routinely imagine eventually become bored with authenticity. The wonderful thing about the Duquettes is that though they love fantasy, they love antiques equally. For example, the pair of eighteenth-century Venetian giltwood dolphins now in the drawing room. They came from the collection of Misia Sert via Frances Elkins, who gave them to the Duquettes as a wedding present.

Another wedding present was an elaborate carved doorway that had once belonged to William Randolph Hearst, which became the frame for the door that leads out of the big drawing room to the front hall. In the center of the overdoor is a Dutch painting of a lady surrounded by a garland of flowers. The painting's mate, a portrait of her husband, has been put under glass and made into a tabletop for a low table in front of a banquette. The curtains for the double-height windows in the same room are assemblages of material stiffened with glue and gesso so that they look like painted carved wood. A deep rope fringe looks as if it too has been carved—it's been petrified like the rest. The valance is made up of a pair of Venetian silver urns and a set of angel wings, both in carved wood. The other major piece of invention in this room is the enormous green-and-white chandelier of flowers and leaves made to the Duquettes' design in Venice. It evokes all the desirable qualities of colored glass as well as everything Pillement ever understood about lilies. It is not meant to be a copy of a Venetian chandelier. It is a chandelier such as only Tony Duquette would have made if he lived in the eighteenth century. Since his is the twentieth, however, there are also a humor and a Surrealism about his chandelier that make his effort far more amazing than a copy would be. And as usual when Duquette reinterprets something, he always makes it larger and bolder than it would have been in the first case.

The dining room is just off the big sitting room. It is flooded at lunchtime with patterned sunlight filtered through wooden fretwork and grilles that form the top and sides of a covered terrace just outside. The ceiling is mirrored and reflects both garden and table. Plants and a green malachite cotton cloth designed years ago line the walls along with pagodas, bird cages, and Oriental spirit houses that sit where a sideboard normally would. The tablecloth is a leopard pattern—an Elsie de Wolfe favorite, which like the mirror recurs in several rooms.

Having seen these two glamorous rooms and the depth and richness of the garden beyond, the impression is that the rest of the house must ramble on forever with a series of bedrooms and sitting rooms. Not so. The charm of the house is that it is actually tiny. Upstairs there is a winter bedroom and a balcony overlooking the big sitting room. On the floor below the main one is a summer bedroom. These rooms are walled in lacquer screens and shut off by Chinese fretwork doors. Like a Lucas Samaras box their ceilings and doors are often treated to a special elaboration that prepares the eye for treasures within. Duquette is fascinated by pairs of doors that open inward in the center and are decorated with pieces of old silk, velvet, or damask in a way that gives the effect of trompe-l'oeil moldings. These doors open invariably to an arrangement of things meant to delight—a carved Venetian figure whose outstretched arms make bars for towels, or a small sitting room for one person. The downstairs bedroom in particular seems like a treasure chest, though one whole side opens onto the middle of the garden. In it is an alcove for a bed whose headboard is covered with French tiger velvet, and above the bed a grillwork backed with mirror. Running across and above the bed are rows of Oriental silks and velvets like an Ottoman tent. Books and catalogues are stacked in "columns" along one side of the bed. The frames of two Napoleon III chairs have been painted with diamond-shaped patches of faux malachite, the seat and back covered in a soft malachite pattern printed on cotton.

Much of the charm of what Tony Duquette has done in this house is for his own visual pleasure. As a result it is impossible to go quickly through the rooms and digest at a glance what is there. An 1830 Axminster rug with a black background and Neoclassical design in yellow is one of the prettiest things in the house. That along with a "Venetian" ceiling Duquette decorated in a painted relief of flowers and birds can completely escape the eye focusing on the chandelier. An ebony presentation chair made in Goa and inlaid with ivory sits quietly among other treasures—up close one can see that Duquette has stippled the tiniest leopard pattern onto the pale beige leather seat. The odd juxtapositions of the serious with the unserious, of one culture with another, are his trademark. And his way of adapting whatever pleases him from the entire vocabulary of architecture and decoration since the beginning of time may be said to constitute a style in itself. No shyness or pedantry prevents him from attempting the most difficult effects. Not long ago he gave a party in the garden. A thousand tiny lights hidden in the pagodas, hung in his faux and real spirit houses, and wired high up in the trees made the garden into a magical Thai village. When the Balinese dancers danced it seemed prettier than Bali. Eventually everyone began to go, and one by one the lights in the garden went out too. The last thing to be turned off was the moon. □ *Editor: Eleanore Phillips*

The Christmas Collections of Pier 1, on the following sixteen pages, is an advertising supplement


THE
CHRISTMAS
COLLECTIONS
OF PIER 1
KONGEN AF DANMARK



Thoughtful giving often require
you to search for the unusual. B
sure to search in the Christmas Co
lections of Pier 1!

Advent candleholder from Den
mark 5.9
Candles, red or white ... **box/10 2.9**

Showcase your cacti, herbs o
violets in a ceramic planter fro
Denmark..... 6.9

Elephant bank from Thailand
hand-painted and hand-glazed i
1000-year tradition 9.9

Group brass-framed miniature mi
rors on wall for a charming accen
From India..... 2.9

Intrigue friends and foil casua
snoopers with classical cryptic loc
from India 4.9

Globe puzzle, a new challenge fo
cube experts, is a Pier 1 exclusiv
from Hungary 8.9

The Fine Art of Giving

A. For storage or display, put ou
rattan shelves in bath, kitchen o
den. From Taiwan. 49.9

B. A bedcover in Bangladesh, th
50x85" handstitched cotton *kan
tha* is a bedspread or wall hang
ing in the USA..... 69.9

C. Treasure your hand-embroi
dered Christmas ornaments yea
after year. From China ... **ea 2.4**

D. Give the tools of absorbing pla
— our 20-piece carpentry kit
From Germany 29.9

E. Men and women both like tidy
convenient bath accessories
From Japan..... **boxed set 7.9**
shell soap ea 49

F. Not even Peruvian mountain
winds are a match for 100% lamb's
wool leg warmers!..... **pr 14.9**

G. Porcelain ornaments from Japan
evoke memories of old-fashioned
Yule celebrations..... **ea 1.9**

H. Keep buttons, stamps, earrings
souvenirs in decorative leather
boxes from India..... 3.99-7.9

I. English preserves and marma
lade are in wood crates for send
ing to far-off gourmets ... **ea 9.9**


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Getting ready for holiday joys is in itself one of the great holiday joys. Handcrafted tree ornaments from Pier 1 add flair to Christmas wrappings, centerpieces, mantel and window decorations.

Happy clown from Taiwan is handpainted papier mache..... **1.49**

Hand-crocheted woolen bird is from China **1.29**

Miniature Chinese fan is handmade of bamboo & paper..... **79¢**

Santa, angel & soldier are silk, from China **1.79 & 1.99**

Red-trimmed angel from China is golden straw, handwoven **59¢**

Lovely old-fashioned cornhusk doll is handmade in Taiwan **49¢**

Gilt bear and red-roofed house are traditional German glass.... **79 & 99¢**

Hand-crocheted snowflake from China is sized cotton..... **59¢**

Cane with red ribbon is woven straw. From China **Set/6 1.49**

The Pleasures of Preparation

A. Santa is "a right jolly old elf," in handmade wheatstraw versions from Hong Kong **ea 99¢**

B. Three bears are durable molded earthenware from Japan. **ea 2.29**

C. You'll treasure hand-embroidered ornaments from India for years to come **ea 2.49**

D. Lovely cards and wrapping papers from Italy & England enhance the pleasure of giving.
Cards..... **ea 49-69¢**
Paper..... **roll 1.99**
Italian scissors..... **2.99**

E. Handblown glass ornaments add to the wonders of Christmas lights. From Germany.... **ea 1.79**

F. Have Santa close at hand for party fun. Japanese mug.... **3.99**

G. Put small gifts or candy treats inside papier mache ornaments! From Germany..... **ea 1.29**

H. Whole families in Ayuthaya, Thailand, join in making crocheted angels for your tree.. **2.79**


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Savor the party season to the full. Explore the Christmas Collections of Pier 1 for gifts of tableware and barware. Replenish your own cupboards, too!

Regatta stripes put pizzazz in bar service. On-the-rocks & highball sizes for most popular drinks **ea 1.49**

The confetti pattern of our storage tins is so popular we're building a whole new collection.
Storage tins from France...**2.49-4.99**
Placemat from England.....**3.99**
Oven mitt.....**4.99**
Potholder.....**2.99**
Mugs from Japan.....**ea 2.99**

Lamplight gladdens the eye in places where candles can't. White or red. From Italy**6.99**

The Delights of Hospitality

A. Brass baskets pick up highlights to brighten any table setting. From India **6.99-12.99**

"Christmas Past" napkins have images from yesteryear ..**ea 2.49**

B. Stemware from Holland gets frosted finish in England.
Liqueur.....**3.49**
Wine, brandy or coupe.....**3.99**

C. Moradabad brass has astounding effect on table setting. Handwoven table runner from Guatemala is a unique festive touch.
Nickel-lined cordial.....**ea 2.99**
Plate.....**9.99**
Table runner**19.99**

D. Extra-tall stems grace traditional French wineglass shapes. From Belgium**box/4 9.99**

E. Exclusive Pier 1 mug designs make a hot drink an event. From Japan**2.49 & 2.79**

F. Recipe box is a Pier 1 exclusive from Poland. For 3x5" cards. Choose from 3 colors.....**12.99**

G. Glasses with European bowl shapes and frosted stems embody sophistication. Cotton placemat & napkin are exclusive Pier 1 Xmas design.
Wineglasses.....**ea 2.49**
Placemat**3.99**
Napkin**2.49**

H. "Iris garden" tea set is a Pier 1 exclusive. Hand-painted in Japanese watercolor style.**19.99**


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ust as the cozy pleasures of home re very important to you at Christnas time, home furnishings and ccents are important in the Christnas Collections of Pier 1.

The design, workmanship and finsh of the "Siam" rattan collection *opposite)* make it appropriate even or the most important rooms of our home.

Love seat, incl. pad..... 269.99
Armchair, incl. pad 129.99
Etagere.....169.99
Coffee table (glass top extra)... 89.99

We offer with pride the elegant new "Ming" rattan collection from craftsmen in Taipei.

Armchair 129.99
Teacart 129.99



THE COMFORT AND CHEER OF HOME

A. Brass pitchers from Holland are lovely for tall flower arrangements or favorite plants.
Pitcher 7¼"H 12.99
12½H" 19.99

B. Our exclusive "Iris garden" collection is porcelain hand-painted in Japanese watercolor style.
Table bell 3.99
Boxes ea 2.99

C. Thai doll is vivid decorative accent or fine addition to a collection. 16"H 14.99

D. Two prints only suggest the size and quality of our collection. Framed, 19½x24½" ea 59.99

E. Gentle motion soothes baby in rattan swing from Indonesia. It looks good in any room 69.99

F. Visit Pier 1 often to keep up with additions to existing collections. Three examples:
Taipei rattan rocker.....129.99
Taipei rattan wall basket 29.99
Accordian blind 3x6' 12.99

G. New oil lamp from Italy has cast brass base, hand-painted porcelain body 12.99

H. You can't have too many for comfort: 22"-square velveteen pillows in popular colors ea 14.99


F


G


H



Vast projects are everyday matters for children. Fortunately, financing needn't be a problem. At Pier 1 we believe toys that nourish imagination most usually cost least.

Your "helpers" on lawn and garden projects can even help a bit!
Wheelbarrow from Denmark **17.99**
3-piece tool set from Germany **3.99**

Fast scooter helps child be first on the scene! From Germany **14.99**

Give "helper" a farm-to-market wagon. From Germany **24.99**

Sturdy rope ladder from Germany is treehouse necessity **12.99**

The Zest of Childhood

A. Solid wood trucks will stay in the family for years of "over-the-rug" service. From Denmark **ea 14.99**

B. Handmade calfskin koala sits in our exclusive director's chair, made of rubberwood & 18-oz. cotton duck (red or navy).
Koala from Germany **14.99**
Child's chair from Thailand **19.99**

C. Give budding lecturer a blackboard with solid beechwood easel (and some chalk).
Blackboard from Hungary **22.99**
Chalk from Germany **box 99¢**

D. Fabric dolls from Hungary make a lovely couple..... **ea 12.99**

E. Soccer requires skill, even on tabletop. From Hungary ... **14.99**

F. Bells teach the ABC's and do-re-mi's. From Germany..... **9.99**

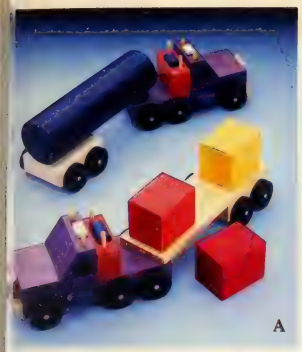
G. "Put your coat on the train!" gets results. From Germany..... **10.99**

H. Christmas memories! Stamped metal toys are from Hungary.
Motorbike w/rider **2.99**
"Roli Zoli" clown **3.99**
Train..... **7.99**
Trucks **ea 9.99**

I. No gas, no batteries required for rubber-powered plane. Boomerang comes with instructions. From Germany.
Plane **9.99**
Boomerang..... **ea 3.99**

J. Cuddly "ice bear" is made for Pier 1 in Hungary..... **19.99**

K. Our children's kitchen utensils are aluminum, made in Germany.
4-piece pot/pan set **6.99**
8-piece utensil set **5.99**


A

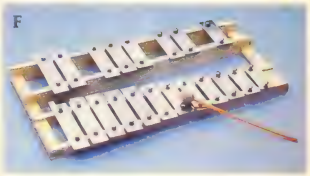

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Ancient crafts are important
Christmas because every produ
shaped by a person's mind ar
hands is unique.

Arrange any gift in a handwove
basket; add a ribbon and a bo
Now you have a double gift and
charming package to put under t
tree.

How much candles contribute to t
light and color of Christmas! E
extravagant with candles this yea
They're not costly, they don't spo
and nobody ever has too many f
the full splendor of Christmas.

The Warmth and Color of Christma

A. Thai porcelain planter is in
1000-year tradition..... **11.9**

B. These pillars are made just fo
Pier 1 in Korea **99¢ & 1.9**

C. Decorative candles from Den
mark come in many shapes.
Round faces..... **ea 2.4**
Tall people **ea 4.9**

D. Lotus leaves are cut in soft cla
by hand. From Japan.
Bowls..... **99¢-2.2**
Plates..... **2.69 & 3.4**

E. Put together an international gi
package — shortbread fro
England, preserves from Ge
many and Hawaii.
Shortbread **2.9**
Cherry preserves **2.3**
Pineapple preserves..... **4.4**

F. 3-part candleholder is adjust
able. Candleholder with globe
great for entry hall. From India.
Adjustable 10½"H **17.9**
With globe 10½"H **9.9**

G. Copper-plated brass snuffers fro
India provide decorative accent
and save your fingers..... **ea 99**

H. Ribbons and stripes bedeck pil
lars from Denmark.
Ribbon candle 3"H..... **3.9**
Ribbon candle 5"H..... **4.9**
Candy-striped candle 6"H... **5.9**

I. Add a tin of tea to a tea set for
gift to warm body and spirit.
Tea set from Japan **19.9**
Tea from Scotland, 8oz **5.9**

J. Thai replicas of old opiu
weights are 1-2"H.
Set/5 on wood stand..... **19.9**


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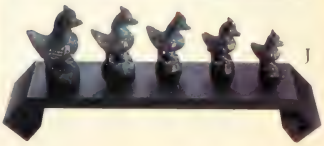

WILSON'S
SHORTBREAD
Pineapple
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F


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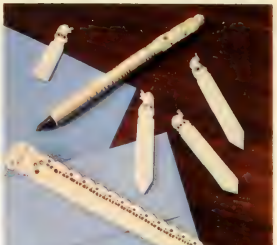

H


Melrose's
English Breakfast Tea
MELROSES
I


J



A


B



C


D



E


F

G

A. Imported sweets are always appreciated!..... 1.99-7.

B. Handcarved bone desk items a from India..... 49¢-2.

C. From Germany, soap on rope one fine gift for any man.... 4.

D. German cards are designs fro early 1900's.
Cards, 2 decks boxed..... 9.
Thai ashtray..... 12.

E. Scented soap from Germany gift with continental touch.
2 bars boxed..... 3.

F. Guatemalan sash is pure cotto handloomed. 7.

G. Handcarved beech chess set from Yugoslavia..... 34.

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Japanese doll erasers will make young author happy ea 89

A squeeze on the trapeze make Czech acrobat spin..... 2.9

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Push down on driver and Hungar ian car speeds ahead..... 99

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Apron..... 9.9
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(Continued from page 127) Connecticut is a character whose magnificent contradictions would greatly amuse Roth-the-novelist. But Roth-the-man hadn't met Claire Bloom when he moved to Connecticut, nor was he lured to the country by a weekend house-party. His reason for embracing the Lonovian ideal is, he says, so simple and obvious it requires no apology—he came for his work.

"I lived in New York, mostly in a brownstone, from 1963 to 1970," he explains. "Everybody would go out in the morning, and there I'd be—alone, trying to keep the city at bay. I put double-glazing on the windows and complained about stereos across the courtyard, but even then there were sounds I couldn't stand: a dog upstairs scratching on the floor, a door slamming. I couldn't go out to lunch because that too was a distraction, and I didn't stay out late in the evening because I wanted to get started in the morning. All in all, I knew why I was living there—I was alone—but I didn't know why I was *writing* there."

New York was even more of a negative environment whenever Roth compared it to his favorite artists' colony. "I began going to Yaddo in 1963," he recalls. "The first time I went I stayed six months. I loved sleeping in the old Victorian Palace, walking to my bare studio with my workman's lunchpail, working until I got stuck and then taking a solitary walk around Saratoga." By 1970, the contrast between the prodigious bouts of writing he did at Yaddo—usually in the winter, when only a dozen people tended to be there—and the difficulty he experienced working in New York drove him to rent a house in Woodstock.

Roth liked the one-man writer's colony he created for himself in Woodstock and intended to stay in that area. But at a party given by Random House editor Jason Epstein, he heard the painter Cleve Gray and his writer wife, Francine du Plessix Gray, talking about a house for sale in their corner of Connecticut. Roth drove over one afternoon—and discovered that this was a very unusual house indeed. "In the twenties, the owners paid the town to move the road from the front to out back of the apple orchard," he explains. "And this is what appealed to me when I first saw it: the house was facing nowhere."



A Bloom touch: seasonal fruit will be replaced by apples from their own orchard.

Those privacy-minded owners went on to enlarge the kitchen and attach a barn to the house as a "summer room." And then, thankfully, they stopped. As a result, almost two hundred years after its construction, the house remains so true to its origins that it has never been painted. Every few years, to Roth's delight, a man comes and stains it with linseed oil.

For his part, Roth has not been quick to alter the house's design or mood. He would like to have a more efficient heating system, but that would require six-inch-high baseboards along the walls. "It would look like a motel," Roth says, "and I just couldn't do that to the house." The changes he has made are extremely modest: a sauna where the downstairs bath used to be, a stone floor and sliding glass doors in the summer room, larger kitchen cabinets.

Roth has been only slightly less reverential in his remake of the smallest building on his forty acres—the studio. "I wanted the kind of environment where working made sense," he says, and so he refurbished the studio's kitchen and bath, shored up a floor, ordered a phone that doesn't take incoming calls, and had a typing table custom-built so his long legs wouldn't bang against it every time he wheeled his posture chair to his Selectric. Then he hung some drawings by his friend Philip Guston and the Czech writer Bruno Shulz, set several photographs on his desk ("That's me in Prague, walking toward the building where Kafka's father had his office"), dragged in some file cabinets—and went to work.

"From 1971 to 1975, I published a book a year," Roth says, swiveling in his standard-issue leather Eames chair to contemplate the empty desk where most of those books were wrestled into being. "That's largely because of this place and the discipline it imposes. *My Life As a Man,* for instance—I owe that book to this place. It was begun in 1969, but I didn't publish it for years. I'd write, make no headway, go off and do something else. I was unhappy, really steely miserable. But there was no way around it, not here. There's a tremendous amount of drive I pick up from this place. It sharpens my single-mindedness, intensifies the monomania."

"Megalomania?"

"Monomania," Roth says, quick with the correction. "If you're a megalomaniac, you can't make it out here. The trees and the birds aren't interested. But if you're a monomaniac—or a mythomaniac, or a graphomaniac—you're in business."

Like Flaubert, who was said by Henry James to have "felt of his vocation almost nothing but the difficulty," Roth's greatest apparent pleasure lies in the alchemical conversion of frustration into literature.

"Problem solving is what I do," Roth says. "It's what the activity is, all day, sometimes a sentence, sometimes a whole book. My satisfactions come from solving those problems. It's work, just endless work. There isn't time for any bullshit. I just have to work all the time, very hard, and cut everything else out."

No matter how it's going, Roth comes to the studio at 9:30 each morning, plays music on the radio for a few minutes, and *(Continued on page 214)*

(Continued from page 213) starts writing. When that palls, he walks, counting the time spent striding through nature as doubly profitable if he comes back to his desk with one usable sentence. He lunches alone, returns to the studio, and sits over his typewriter again until "the frustration that drips in my system like water from a leaking tap" forces him outside once more.

Roth usually works like this for twenty months straight. Then, inevitably, there is a crisis. "No writing," he reports. "Just sitting at my desk. And then suddenly, very simply, after all that wrongness, the book virtually writes—or rights—itself. So the two years it generally takes to write a book means a long running start to get to the pitch, and then the leap of the last three or four months. And I come out here nights then, or I'm taking a shower and halfway through I have an idea and rush off in my bathrobe to come back out here and have yet another go at the book. Those last months are wonderful."

This is, of course, not a novel way of working. Flaubert longed "to live in a place where no one loves me or knows me, where the sound of my name causes only indifference," and even in the first heat of his affair with Louise Colet, he saw her only six times in eighteen months. Kafka went even further: "The best mode of life for me would be to sit in the innermost room of a spacious locked cellar with my writing things and a lamp. Food would be brought and always put down far away from my room, outside the cellar's outermost door. The walk to my food, in my dressing gown, through the vaulted cellars, would be my only exercise."

Roth too believes he has to be entombed to write well, but his, he says, is "a benign prison." Considering that his days are devoted to writing and his nights to reading, that he doesn't like to cook or play the host, and that he's "as savage over my dinner alone as anybody else, tearing things with ten fingers while I read the paper," it is not immediately clear how his style differs from Flaubert's or Kafka's. At this point, however, the critical difference appears at the door.

"Yes?"

Claire Bloom steps into the office. "Don't open the door," she announces. "You'll kill me."

Roth has already pointed out an inner room in the studio, replete with a chinning bar, a contraption for sit-ups, and an exercise bicycle. Bloom, who wears a simple skirt, Pendleton shirt, cardigan sweater, and pearls, is on her way there. "There's a chinning bar on the door," she says, "and there's no lock. . . ."

"And there's a big picture of it on the cover of House & Garden," Roth says, instigating a burst of laughter from all involved.

Bloom closes the door behind her, but her presence lingers. "You have to be with someone to live out here," Roth says. "That goes without saying." It also goes without saying that Bloom—who has lived with Roth for almost seven years—doesn't have the vocational luxury of spending all her time in Connecticut. She endured her first winter here, using the isolation to write a book, but since then has accepted work that takes her from the farmhouse for weeks at a time.

Bloom's influence, though nowhere



In the spartan bedroom the old name of the farm appears on needlepoint pillow made by Bloom.

overt, can be felt in the softening of the house's Puritan edges and the mellowing of her lover's rage and frustration. Since her arrival, two modified geodesic domes have been erected near the house, allowing the couple to spend time in bug-free nature under a sky of mesh. The glossy-white bedroom that, to Roth, is the manifestation of Rilke's desire to sleep up among the trees is humanized by Bloom's needlepoint pillows. From the kitchen comes the smell of new potatoes in a skillet. In this context, even the terrible clang of the antique bell that Bloom uses to summon the writer to dinner has ironic appeal.

So complete is their commitment to this life that Roth and Bloom make the tedious two-hour drive to New York no more than once a month. They entertain equally infrequently. "There's the tofu run, the fish run, the veal run, the bread run, the fresh fruit and vegetable run—and they're all in different directions," Roth notes. "If we're having guests, Claire puts 125 miles on the car."

Despite their isolation, the only dark cloud over the Connecticut retreat hangs over Roth's studio. "Ordinarily, by the time I've finished a book and it's about to be published, I've started another," he says. "This is the first time in twenty years that I haven't. I was really beat—I'd had frustration up to here—and didn't even know how beat I was. I've made one page of notes for a new book but fortunately I lost it."

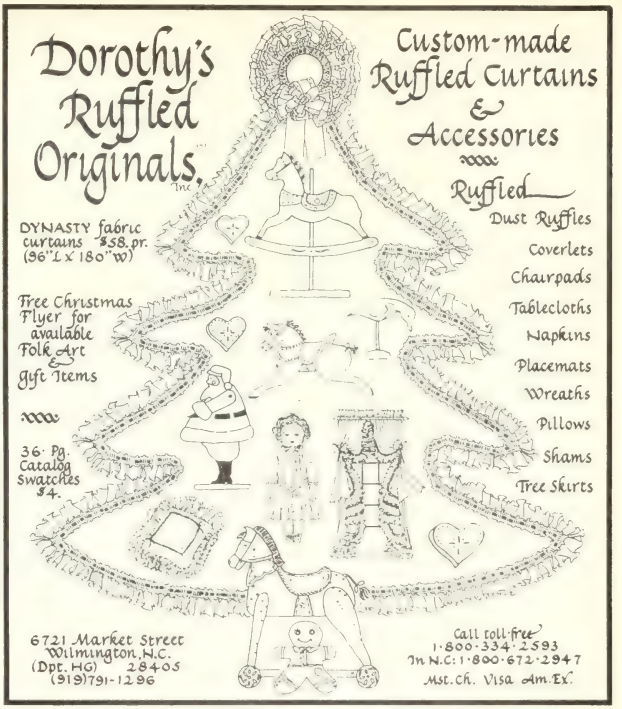
Were Roth really Zuckerman—a writer crying out against his "solitary confinement," declaring himself "sick of raiding my memory and feeding on the past"—this unprecedented lapse in production might easily be the harbinger of silence. Certainly, a number of critics and not a few readers will be inclined to think so. But at the end of the Zuckerman series, when Zuckerman gives up his wild plan to become a doctor, he returns to his New York brownstone—alone, "a man apart." In Connecticut, though, Philip Roth is standing in mid-meadow and announcing, without irony, "Life is the two of us." Nathan Zuckerman would give anything to say that. □



Tiny rocking chair confronts big bed

(Continued from page 120) readily is neither Classicism nor Modernism, but rather that charmed moment in the thirties—poised between the waning of the earlier style and the triumph of the latter—when Surrealism incorporated elements of both to make its often indecipherable comments on modern life. Specifically, it evokes French Surrealism, with its piquant juxtaposition of bourgeois imagery set in a kind of Platonic ideal landscape. Thus the Tsao apartment seems much like one of the old "Improbable Interviews" in *Vanity Fair,* in which unlikely interlocutors were brought incongruously face to face. Here we might imagine Le Corbusier meeting Jean Cocteau: the austere, uncompromising master of modern architecture coolly appraising the high-strung and supremely imaginative tightrope walker between art and the theater.

In fact, Le Corbusier and the eccentric French patron Charles Beistegui produced a memorable design in 1930–31 that was rather close to what Tsao and McKown have done: Le Corbusier's rooftop terrace for Beistegui in Paris was embellished by its owner with sprightly iron chairs as lively as those that Tsao had reproduced for his dining room, similar fake stone furniture, and a striking but incongruous mantelpiece with an equally ambiguous mirror above it. In both cases, however, the viewer could depend on a quick reference back to reality: in the case of the Beistegui terrace, the Arc de Triomphe was visible, while out the windows of the Tsao apartment lies Central Park, green, familiar, and constant. □ *By Martin Filler. Editor: Heather Smith MacIsaac*





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JOURNAL



IN PRAISE OF FOLLIES

Follies: Architecture for the Late Twentieth Century Landscape. Leo Castelli Gallery, New York, through Nov. 23; James Corcoran Gallery, Los Angeles, Jan. 21–Feb. 25, 1984.

The garden folly is the ultimate architectural luxury item: unnecessary, unreasonable, and devoid of any function except to give delight. Follies bespeak wealth sufficient for the indulgence of personal whim, and their sudden vogue in eighteenth-century England was as much a sign of a new economic order as it was of the emergent Romantic sensibility. In our own, care-worn century, the folly has been largely neglected by important architects (with the obvious exception of Philip Johnson, for what is his famous New Canaan estate if not a collection of follies?).

Now, however, a fascinating exhibition of nineteen new follies by avant-garde architects makes it seem that a revival of that minor art is underway. Curated by B.J. Archer, who organized Castelli's 1980 *Houses for Sale* show, this exhibition is similar to it in that the designs are offered along with the architects' services in constructing them.

Given the history of follies, it's no surprise that several of these are Classical in spirit. Quinlan Terry's arch-and-obelisk dedicated to Margaret Thatcher would be at home at Blenheim, though Ricardo Bofill's chilly little temple reminds one more of the stripped Classicism of the Third Reich. Other pasts are recalled by Arata Isozaki's serene thatched Japanese teahouse and Michael Graves's romantic pairing of a pyramid and an Arcadian primitive hut. More practical-minded Americans might respond to Andrew Batey and Mark Mack's handsome tent for wine-tastings, Rafael Moneo's outdoor water clock, or Christian Hubert's ingenious programed folly that exists only on a computer-activated video screen, perfect for someone who's had it with Pac-Man.

Two of the most intriguing offerings come from Emilio Ambasz and Frank Gehry. Ambasz, the subterranean Serlio, has envisioned a haunting environment uniting earth, air, fire, and water, tellingly entitled *Man Is an Island.* And as is customary, Gehry offers a provocatively enigmatic fantasy. Called *The Prison,* his work juxtaposes a coiled brick snake structure with a large glass fish, the first used to confine a burglar until the police come, the second to put the lawbreaker on view. It awaits not just a hapless thief, but also a patron of imagination and wit.

Martin Filler



Above: Batey and Mack's wine-tasting tent. *Left:* Terry's Classical arch-and-obelisk.





Top: Man Is an Island by Emilio Ambasz: a meditation on man's place in the universe. *Above: The Prison* by Frank Gehry: domestic-crime deterrent or habitable sculpture?

CANVASSING OUR NATIONAL ICONS

A New World: Masterpieces of American Painting, 1760–1910. Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Dec. 7–Feb. 12, 1984; Louvre, Paris, Mar. 17–June 11, 1984.

We have known most of the pictures in this show since childhood. They have appeared on notecards, in history and medical books, and one is even on the dollar bill. They have been reproduced on the calendars that hang in barbershops and school rooms. Americans have painted them by number, needlepointed facsimiles, and caricatured them in political cartoons and advertising. In fact, we've encountered these archetypal statements of the American vision in so many places and forms, we feel so intimately knowledgeable of them, that it is easy to forget how few of us have actually seen the real thing.

Geographical limitations are part of the problem. How many people wandered the corridors of the Jefferson Medical College looking for Thomas Eakins's *The Gross Clinic*? Most art lovers have not been to Youngstown, Ohio, to see Winslow Homer's *Snap the Whip* or to Andover, Massachusetts, to visit his later *Eight Bells*. It is a curious fact of American cultural history that a substantial percentage of those paintings the general public considers key to our heritage were acquired not by our major museums but by smaller institutions outside the mainstream of this country's art world. Perhaps this is evidence that leading fine arts experts undervalue qualities shared by the majority of pictures in this show, qualities that are simultaneously esteemed by the population living in the American heartland: a clear narrative strain, sharp-focus realism, a romantic vision of this country's landscape, and a celebration of old-fashioned virtues such as hard work and devotion to family.

Regardless of the reasons that firsthand acquaintance with these national icons has proved elusive, the problem is solved, at least for the duration of the exhibition's tour. And the impact of entering a gallery hung with so many celebrated images is dazzling. Like a guest at the Academy Awards, the visitor is surprised by how

Continued on page 220



Mary Cassatt, *The Bath,* 1891



SEER OF A NEW VISION

Art directors who capture the essence of a moment are common; those who propel us into the future are rare. Eiko Ishioka is one of the rare ones. Over the past fifteen years her innovative yet evocative work—which includes graphic design, TV commercials, documentaries, packaging, exhibitions, and costumes—has been a major unifying factor in Japan's new design direction, seen by many to be the most exciting in the world today. Aside from her extraordinary visual sense, much of her success stems from her gift for collaboration with the most talented of her countrymen, including fashion designer Issey Miyake (who dressed Faye Dunaway, *left,* for an Ishioka commercial and poster for the Parco department store) and director Akira Kurosawa. Their tributes to her in a stunning new book, *Eiko by Eiko* (Callaway Editions, $75), confirm her importance as a contemporary cultural catalyst of international impact. *M.F.*



John Singer Sargent, *Madame X,* 1884

THE STAGE MAGIC OF DAVID HOCKNEY

Hockney Paints the Stage, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Nov. 20–Jan. 22, 1984; Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, June 9–Aug. 12; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Sept. 16–Nov. 11.

It is now only eight years since David Hockney produced his first theater décors—the sets and costumes for the unforgettable, Hogarth-inspired 1975 Glyndbourne Festival mounting of Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress, top right.* In the years since, he has firmly established himelf as one of the leading stage designers of our century, bringing a much-needed breath of fresh air and a jolt of pure, vibrant color to a realm of design that has languished between pallid neo-Impressionism and post-Brechtian uglification.

Hockney, the truth be told, is not the most original of artists: his sets for the Met's 1980 *Parade* owe an overwhelming debt to Picasso, and his scheme for that same company's 1981 *Rite of Spring* is beholden to such lesser artists as the English Art Deco pottery painter Clarice Cliff. Nonetheless, Hockney has a true instinct for the magic of the theater, and his faux naïf style is perfect for our suspension of disbelief.

This stunning exhibition, comprised of paintings, drawings, models, costumes, and props—250 items in all—includes all of his opera designs (including his 1978 Glyndbourne *Magic Flute, bottom right*) as well as works from earlier in his career that prefigure them. What is revealed above all is a lifelong love affair with the stage and its long parallel history with the visual arts. Looking back at his brief but estimable stage career, we are reminded that our times would seem much drabber without the art of David Hockney. *M.F.*





COURTESY ARTIST AND KNOEDLER

AND YOU'LL BE A SLOANE, MY SON





Sloanes use protective coloration for easy identification

Why is it that other countries' class obsessions seem so much more amusing than our own? Whatever the reason, one of this season's most hilarious offerings in the genre of social satire is a how-to book called *The Official Sloane Ranger Handbook* by Ann Barr and Peter York (St. Martin's Press, $6.95). The Sloane Rangers are England's plus-perfect preppies, with the added extra of ruling-class cachet that is forever England. Their name derives from Sloane Square, the London SW7 mecca for the young Hons. and debutantes who, in a world beset by change, are determined to stick to the tried-and-true values of What Really Matters.

The archetypal Sloanes are named Caroline and Henry (or Emma or Lucinda or Mark or Charles), but never Daisy or Tracy or Walter or Keith. They never get over their nannies, or not getting into Eton. The boys go up to Oxbridge, while the "gels" take Cordon Bleu courses, learn flower arranging, or teach nursery school like the former Lady Di (the ultimate Sloane Ranger). Soon Caroline and Henry will wed, have a little "ratlet," and the cycle begins anew. Now we know why there always *will* be an England. *M.F.*

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JOURNAL

(Continued from page 217) many "stars" surpass expectation and disappointed to see that others seem less satisfying than their ubiquitous reproductions in other media. These are the works the tourists want to see, and so they are rarely removed from display. It took a high-powered assemblage of the museum world's leadership to pry the 110 treasures in this exhibit from their home institutions. Pierre Rosenberg, curator of paintings at the Louvre, and John Walsh, former Boston Museum curator and now J. Paul Getty Museum director, conceived this project because, as Rosenberg has written, "The strength of contemporary American art has been so irresistible, its impact so stunning, that Europeans have neglected to inquire into its beginnings and its steady development to maturity." *Mary Ann Tighe*

SEASIDE URBANITY

(Continued from page 137) Jamaica. Hoffman also built many churches and chapels including St. Ann's in Lenox, Massachusetts, and the Catholic Church at Boca Grande in Florida, and these were perhaps his favorite commissions.

Burrall Hoffman's training as an architect was old-fashioned. His adherence to classical taste was heartfelt. When Frank Lloyd Wright asked Hoffman to work with him he refused, explaining to a friend, "I don't think he ever cared for aesthetics that much." With the advent of Modernism it may have seemed that his style was as outdated as the age of luxury and leisure in which he was brought up. But the very word "classic" implies the endurance of quality, and now it seems that the tide of fashion is returning to Mr. Hoffman's concept of elegance. The design for the Cultural Center in Miami has many similarities to Vizcaya. Philip Johnson spent many hours there while working on the plans, and the center brings Vizcaya to mind not only in its pink-coral and stucco and the barrel tiles of the roof, but also in more specific details like the four blind round windows, the half-moon windows, and the slanting roofs. □ *Clare Ruthrauff*

(Continued from page 99) hanging around me, and consequently I was able to examine any piece, to move it around and get down on the floor and really study it. Of course I always had the good sense to get out of a room when a customer was brought in by the dealer, but otherwise there were no barriers whatsoever."

In fact, the Gershes became favorites among New York's antiques merchants, who were taken with the fervor of the young couple. As Mr. Gersh recalls, "Many of the dealers then were highly eccentric people who appreciated eccentricity, especially in people who weren't rich but who had a passion for furniture. Their fancy was taken by the fact that here were people who shouldn't have been doing this kind of thing."

Although the Gershes were cautious in their acquisitions, they were swiftly decisive when their instincts called. "We always struck and took anything we cared for at the earliest possible moment we were able to get it. We never doubted. We always pushed ourselves, as we assumed it might not be there a week later. Anything we wanted very badly we got—by hook or by crook."

As Mrs. Gersh remembers, "The dealers were so kind. Even though we might have an enormous balance owing, they knew that we made our payments religiously, so they extended themselves in every way. They would put things away for us. Benjamin Ginsburg hung a girandole in a bathroom at Ginsburg & Levy for several years to keep it, as it were, on reserve for us. The little *sang-de-boeuf* bottles in our bedroom were kept by Frank Caro in his vault. Every now and then we would ask, 'Do you still have them?' and he would say, 'Do you think I would for one moment let those go? They're yours.'"

Thus the Gershes' treasury grew bit by bit. Luckily for them, although there was never any joy quite like that of bringing home a new piece, they never ceased to derive pleasure from what they already had. "We don't have anything that we're not passionately in love with," says Martin Gersh with such conviction that you realize that money was not the key to what they've accomplished. Had Gloria Gersh been an heiress or Martin Gersh a tycoon, they would *(Continued on page 222)*



THE ROOM THAT IS REPLACING THE HOUSE . . .

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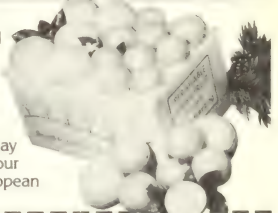
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(Continued from page 221) have done it the same way, only on a grander scale. One can imagine the collection of paintings they would have assembled.

The sincerity of the Gershes' love for the styles of the first three Georges is beyond question, and no doubt they would have been drawn to them no matter what their means. Yet the fact remains that when the Gershes began collecting in 1960, and for most of the two decades following that, eighteenth-century English furniture was relatively underpriced, especially when compared to other contemporary schools. The sixties were the go-go years not only for the stock market, but also for Fine French Furniture, which collectors such as the Wrightsmans, the Fords, and the Linskys vied for in a series of landmark auctions. More scintillating and extroverted, it drew big-money attention away from the quieter glories of Georgian furniture, which had never regained the popularity it had in the 1910s and twenties, when Lord Duveen purveyed it to his clients as accessories suitable for their Gainsboroughs, Reynoldses, and Hoppners. Overlooked in the shifting tides of fashion, eighteenth-century English furniture possessed precisely the qualities they most admired.

As Martin Gersh points out, "The things we like must have beauty, and harmony of style and design. But they also must have complexity. There are many things that have beauty and harmony but no complexity, and while I admire them, I don't feel a need to live with them. And the execution must be first-rate. You see so many things that are very ambitious in the way they're conceived, but then the execution falls down in some way. On the other hand, you often find things that have beautiful carving, but the proportions are clumsy. The idea is to find a perfect balance of design and execution."

Time and time again, the Gershes have found not only that perfect balance, but often pieces that are among the very greatest, if not *the* greatest, of their kind. Take just one corner of their living room: a dazzling silver object catches the eye, a rare English chinoiserie tea caddy made by the wildly



On a rare English Rococo tripod, c. 1765, a chinoiserie silver tea caddy, 1763–4.

imaginative Christopher Makemeid in 1763–64. In the form of a peak-roofed Chinese pavilion, it swarms with its virtuoso designer's lively imaginings of an exotic idyll, compressing into minuscule form all the heady romance that the newly introduced beverage held for the ruling class of England. Perhaps even more astounding is the table on which it sits. This George III carved mahogany tripod is without question one of the supreme attainments of the Rococo taste in England, a country where that impish coda to the Baroque never took as firm a hold as it did in Germany or France. Delicacy and strength, whimsy and insight are combined in this piece in equal measure. Forget architecture as frozen music: this table might have been composed by Haydn.

It's not surprising, then, that the Gershes talk about their things with such a sense of animation, not to mention personification. As Gloria Gersh observes, "Great furniture is like great sculpture, and like any great work of art it is ever-stimulating and ever-new. Our things have enormous presence and enormous personality. They are so *alive*. When you are in rooms with the perfectly respectable furniture that most people buy it seems to have no personality, no intensity. It gives you nothing back. To us, the things we have are always welcoming. They are always stimulating and they are always astonishing. It seems to me that this furniture represents the most humane aspect of man, what he can do at his best and most benign and most harmonious with the universe."

And if the getting of that furniture involved privation of a material sort, it also has brought the Gershes immense spiritual satisfaction. These works of art are not just the center but the solace of their lives. As Martin Gersh puts it, "It seems wonderful to me that we own these things, that they're with us, and that they'll outlive us all. But while I'm alive, these are my things to live with and love every day. They are a tremendous comfort at all times. There is never a moment, no matter what the conditions of life are, that I don't feel a sense of joy being here with these objects."

Thus the Gershes have created a still, small place that is even more than a home or museum. It is their protest against the randomness, anxiety, and menace of modern life, their sanctuary in which they can commune with beauty, and, as they see it, with truth. The things they own might one day be dispersed, or with some luck might be kept together. But no matter what their ultimate fate, it is safe to say that they will never be loved with greater passion than they are today.

Some people might question the specifics of the Gershes' chosen way of life, but who would presume to judge the values behind it? They have had fulfillment of a kind that they alone can know the worth of. Theirs is a story of great devotion, to each other and to principles. If this is a grand obsession, then for Gloria and Martin Gersh it is assuredly a fine madness.

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(Continued from page 171) almost envious.

The following day Mr. X arrived himself and that was quite an experience; tousled gray hair, enormous energy, considerable charm, and to help matters he knew exactly what he wanted. "Do you like the place?" Immediately he puts one at one's ease. When talking he turns this way and that, gesticulating with his hands but in a way particular to himself; the arms are down and the hands gyrate from this position. "My wife and I hate dark furniture, and we don't want anything Provençal. I have been told that you will make everything white." "Well, not quite," I answered. "That's all right, that's fine with me. Everything is to be very simple, with no really good pieces of furniture. You understand?" Mr. X wanted the house as a retreat from the pressure of his life in New York and his constant travels. It was only later that I met Mrs. X; pretty, very feminine, and slightly bemused by her husband's whirlwind activities, but with a will of her own. I fell for them both and working for them was a great pleasure. They gave me the guiding lines and then left me to it.

Owing to the scale of the house, the colors had to be on the quiet side; many of the walls were to remain white, or just broken with a suggestion of green or yellow. The materials also had to be small-patterned and light. Basically it was to be a house that the family came to in the spring or early summer, and I wanted it to reflect this mood. The small sitting room has a white linen sofa, a clear Perspex coffee table in front of it, and armless comfortable chairs—the material covering them a very simple green-and-yellow patterned chintz. There wasn't room for real armchairs. The drinks table comes from David Hicks and is white sycamore with a sand-colored marble top. The stone floor we partly covered with raffia matting made by Les Tapis de Cogalin near St. Tropez. The only hints of real luxury in the room are a handsome painting on silk of a white dog by Castiglione, the Jesuit father working for Emperor Ch'ien-lung in Peking during the eighteenth century, a faded blue-washed gouache of a Chinese Buddha, and a touching print found at Malletts in London of a girl offering a magnolia bloom to a fawn. An endearing early-nineteenth-century wooden owl from Austria presides over the drinks table set with old, rectangular, cut-glass decanters, and a handsome *famille verte* vase made into a lamp stands on a low draped table by the sofa. This small room sets the mood of the whole house—great simplicity mixed with a touch of exoticism.





Top: A quick look through the archway reveals a lovely tree-lined courtyard. *Above:* A detail of the sitting area adjacent to the courtyard.

The dining room was so narrow we furnished its length with two round tables covered in an attractive pale-yellow-and-white glazed chintz from Colefax and Fowler. The eight chairs surrounding them are of unpainted wood with rush seats. A series of Hodges's engravings of India hang on the wall and an intricately carved marble plaque of the Mughal period hangs over the fireplace. It was found in Lucca, where two young dealers, one Italian and one Siamese, have started a remarkable shop specializing in Oriental art. It is named the Galleria Craag after Carl Craag, the Siamese partner, and it comes as a delicious surprise for anyone interested in the Orient. I had the plaque framed in molded plexiglass, and it has become one of my favorite objects. The house is full of things I would have bought for myself and I feel this is the only way to work for someone else if one is allowed the luxury of choosing. Luckily Mr. and Mrs. X both share my love of India, and the house is full of watercolors by Englishmen working in the country at the beginning of this century. There is also a series of handsome engravings by the Daniells, uncle and nephew, who toured India some two hundred years ago, recording everything they saw. All the paintings and prints of India come from Eyre and Hobhouse in London, a place that it is well to avoid if one doesn't want to be tempted! Upstairs I placed fourposter beds wherever possible, one hung with a blue-and-white printed cotton from Souleiado, carefully chosen to avoid their too blatantly Provençal designs. (I write this admiring what they do, but wish they would use a little more imagination when consulting their old documents. Upstairs in the attic of the handsome Tarascon house in which the printing is done there exists a whole library of tantalizing files showing every cotton the company has blocked out since the year 1700.)

The master bathroom was to be tiled in terra cotta, but eventually we lined it in unpolished travertine from Italy. The only disagreement I had with the architect centered around his fondness for niches. It is a habit of this country, and one finds them often in old houses in lieu of cupboards; not a practical so-

lution for small rooms where there is not enough work space. A charming little room adjoins the X's suite and this we made into a study with an English mahogany writing desk covered in green leather and a George III armchair with green hide cushions. The walls are padded and covered with an unobtrusive patterned gray-and-yellow cotton. Here again there are watercolors representing Indian scenes.

Hanging and storage space was a great problem in the house, which we were able to solve by running up a false wall or screen along the back of the study. The ends were left open, thus giving one free access to the cupboards built in behind it.

As to the garden, which was nonexistent, Mr. X consulted Gilbert Occelli, a talented young French designer. Gardening in Provence is not easy; the soil in most places is poor and the climate rude, too cold in winter and too hot and dry in the summer. One has to be well-versed as to which plants will or will not thrive. The top of a fairly exposed plateau with no great depth of soil did nothing to help matters and imposed its own restrictions. Mr. Occelli found 40 old olive trees and planted them at the approach to the house, starting his garden plan from here. Two raised platforms to one side of the house, one divided into four and planted with herbs and the other spread with gravel and arranged with pots, formed one element. To the right of the approach, Mr. X had been obliged to sink a huge reservoir for his water, which is pumped up from a 120-meter-deep well. This gave Mr. Occelli about fifty centimeters of soil, a problem he solved by making a little formal parterre with box and gravel paths centered around two large terra-cotta pots planted with clipped box. Two variegated standard hollies marked the entrance. The result is decorative and puts one in mind of gardens one has seen in seventeenth-century Dutch paintings. The southern façade of the house is all gravel arched over with a simple iron trellis covered with Concord grapes. The swimming pool, blasted out of solid rock, lies below this and is reached by a descent massed with lavender that is kept clipped into tight balls when not in bloom. The garden, like the house, has been very simply treated and is very much in keeping with its wild surroundings. It's a place of utter enchantment, redolent with tangy smells and alive with butterflies, scuttling lizards, and the buzzing of bees, the whole bathed in the clear, beautiful Provençal light. □

FABRIC CORRECTIONS

Brunschwig & Fils was the source for the following: In the September 1983 issue—On pages 98–99, "La Conversation Chinoise." On 100–101, "Souvenir de Chine." On 105, "Filigree Stripe." In the October 1983 issue—On 114, embossed linen velvet. On 126, "Cernay" stripe and "Sikar" floral print. On 127, on stool, "Chenonceaux" taffeta. *Clarence House* was the source, in the October 1983 issue, for the "Noailles" cream-colored floral on pages 170–171.

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LE PIGEONNIER SAINT-JEAN

The story of this property in Grasse is as romantic as the garden it contains

By Anita Pereire and Gabrielle van Zuylen



Lavender, marguerite, *Santolina*, an olive tree, and cypresses border the path on one of the lower terraces of the garden that gives way to a view of Grasse.

Le Pigeonnier Saint-Jean is a simple but lovely old bastide surrounded by a garden of infinite charm and poetry. The story of its acquisition is as romantic as the property itself. The farm was bought before the Second World War by an American lady, Miss Hodges, the daughter of one of J.P. Morgan's partners, to protect the view below her villa. Meanwhile, the present owner, Mr. Hubert Schlienger, the head of a family perfume business in Grasse, saw the house, fell in love with it, and determined to buy it. For almost twenty years he ceremoniously called on Miss Hodges to persuade her to sell him the property. Over their yearly cup of tea she delighted in refusing all offers on the grounds that, firstly, he was a bachelor, a state she profoundly disapproved of, and, secondly, that he was French. She could not approve of Frenchmen, as their traditional pastime was defrauding their government. When he came to tea in 1960, he brought with him the lady he had waited for and loved as long as he had coveted the Pigeonnier Saint-Jean. The next day he received an imperative summons from Miss Hodges, who announced that as he was about to remove her first objection to the sale, and in such a satisfactory way, she would overlook his nationality.

Until 1962 the property was a real farm. The ground floor of the house lodged the livestock while the farmer and his family lived on the upper floors. The land was used to grow jasmine for the Grasse perfume industry and was treeless save for a few old cypresses. The garden only began to take shape after the house was restored, and it grew at its own natural rhythm around the house and along the terraces, or *planches* as they are called in the south of France. All the existing natural elements, the olive trees, cypresses, old stone walls and central downhill path, were conserved and incorporated in the garden by the excellent M. Calabre, gardener at Le Pigeonnier since the beginning.

The property is almost invisible from the road above, and it is almost impossible to imagine the charm and peace below until you walk under its narrow green archway formed by two huge cypresses. This leads to the front of the house, which is joined at right angles to the smaller, tiled *pigeonnier*. The extraordinarily vigorous rose 'La Folette' climbs in and out of the cypresses, its lovely, double rose-pink and creamy copper flowers set off wonderfully by the dark green of its host. This prolific rose bears over two thousand flowers annually and is at its best in the warm climate of the south of France; raised by Lord Brougham's

gardener at Cannes, it will grow well on any sunny, sheltered wall. 'La Folette' shares its space with the beautiful Banksian rose *Banksia lutescens,* the Chinese rambler happily rediscovered at Sir Thomas Hanbury's famous vanished garden La Mortola at Menton. Over 50,000 small yellow fragrant flowers are produced on long, arching tresses every year in April and May.

A stone bench bordered wth rounded, clipped box stands against the façade of the *pigeonnier,* and more clipped box is mixed with flowers planted in front of the long stone balustrade that overlooks the marvelous view of the wide and fertile valley below Grasse. In the nineteenth century the valley stretching down from Grasse toward the sea was filled with a solid mass of roses grown for the perfume industry. Now, alas, the basic ingredients of perfume are mainly chemical—the few essential oils still used are imported from countries with cheap labor—and the roses have long since given way to housing. But the view is only part of the delight, for there is also the satisfying simplicity of this traditional house, with its pale apricot walls, gray-blue wooden shutters, and the pergola that runs the length of the building. A tangled mixture of grape vines, jasmine, and honeysuckle festoons the pergola, and their green shade shelters a lovely disorder of flowering gardenias, white azaleas, scented geraniums, abutilons, and a few annuals, all in terra-cotta pots, large and small. Climbing 'Madame Meilland', symbolically named 'Peace' when it was smuggled out of France during the war as a seedling and now known throughout the world by that name, covers the façade of the house, growing right up to the white-framed windows. Although 'Madame Meilland' is often, if not always, too vigorous, with overlarge flowers for a small garden, here the enormous yellow flushed-pink flowers are perfect against the gray-tinged apricot of the wall.

The bastide, the smaller *pigeonnier,* and the long stone balustrade form three sides of a grassed rectangle. The fourth side is bordered with a mass of tree peonies near a small, quiet fountain. *(Continued on page 228)*

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(Continued from page 227) Yellow and white irises and euphorbias growing through rosemary surround a stone trough, thickly planted with pansies.

The garden continues past the pergola and the top of the cypress-lined central path and narrows into a deep, curving ribbon of grass beside a high stone wall that ends by a tall cypress. The wall is underplanted with a variety of things: *Iberis,* a pink-flowering shrub rose, a rounded bed of bearded irises, and a few erect hollyhocks. Glossy arum lilies are tucked into a corner of the wall and pink valerian grows through the cracks—a recurrent theme throughout the garden, softening almost all of the many walls. In the left border, a *Pittosporum* grows through an olive tree, while the huge white flowers of the tree peonies catch the light and shine against soft silver-leaved plants and a few dark purple foxgloves. The garden continues above the wall, up a grassy path set with stone steps to a lawn adjoining the side of the house. Big pots of scented pink geraniums are set among clumps of tall daisies near the side door. There is a silver, purple, and blue border of mixed *Aubrieta,* lavender, veronicas, blue aquilegia, and violets set in the shade. The garden is separated from the open fields beyond by a group of mauve and purple lilacs, pale lavender-blue bearded irises, and deep pockets of blue pansies and lavender. In the open fields there is a ravishing mixture of naturalized irises growing wild under olive trees.

The lower terraces are invisible from the house, marked only by a line of dark cypresses along the descending path, which, like the lower terraces, seems to exist outside time and without formal invention—it seems just a happy coincidence that a few cunningly placed pale apricot irises echo the color of the house glimpsed above the path. Lilacs grow among the cypresses and the path is bordered with euphorbias, rosemary, and *Bergenia.* The wonderful visual effect created by a blanket of self-seeding valerian growing through every crack in a lower wall seems accidental too. Beyond this pink





Top: The copper and rose-pink rose "La Folette" climbs through the cypresses outside the *pigeonnier. Above:* Irises, pink valerian, and *Arctotis* grow along a part of a stone wall.

cloud there is a breathtaking side view of the old part of Grasse. All the terrace walls are used as partly wild gardens. One base wall is thickly covered with Meilland's strident crimson rose 'Cocktail', with bright yellow stamens, the strong pink 'Princess Margaret', and the apricot-pink climbing 'Grus an Aachen'. Valerian grows everywhere on the back wall of the pool terrace, through the climbing 'Madame Meilland', more 'Princess Margaret', and the deep velvet-red, wonderfully fragrant 'Etoile de Hollande'. A low stone wall has been added to form a knee-high bed against the higher wall, and is planted with a tangle of nasturtiums, geraniums, verbena, and other bright annuals.

A lovely detail in the garden is the rose hedge, which separates the pool lawn from the path. Five lovely hybrid musk 'Penelopes' were trained to form this balustrade covered with clusters of pale apricot-salmon flowers, a wonderful idea for a garden. Too often hybrid musks are lamentably absent from gardens where they could be used grouped in tall borders and as hedges.

A deep mixed border of arums, antirrhinums, pink and white dianthus, and pale-blue-flowering *Nepeta* grow under the slightly sloping wall on the other side of the path. In the back part of this border, orange-flowering abutilons nod toward the ever-present pink and white valerian and climbing roses. There is a grove of lemon trees stretching away on one of the lower levels, while another narrow terrace is used as a simple kitchen garden, brightened by clumps of phlox.

The bottom terrace is a semicircular orchard of olive and cherry trees. One ancient fig tree stands in the middle of this, the owners' favorite part of the garden, for it is here that the deep, warm peace of the Midi is most deeply felt.

Charles de Noailles, owner of the nearby Villa Noailles, loved to drop in on Le Pigeonnier Saint-Jean for a glass of *vin d'oranges* and a stroll through the garden. He never imposed his ideas nor made suggestions, but always brought a special cutting from his own garden or a plant from his travels, and would nod with pleasure and contentment over the development of this totally charming and unpretentious garden. The owners freely admit that their approach to gardening is instinctive, and that sometimes they do not know the name of a rose or the variety of a plant, but that they chose them for their beauty. And when you look across the curving 'Penelopes' covered with blushing roses under the flowering almond tree and past the line of cypresses toward the gentle hills, the violet and blue background of the garden, you know that here charm and quiet are all that matters. □

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Connecticut Canopy Bed. Connecticut, circa 1770. This Chippendale-style bed, reproduced in cherry and accented by solid brass bolt covers, is often called a "tester bedstead." The original may be seen in the Essex Room.

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